

SHAKESPEARE.

OTHELLO

WITH

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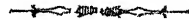
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BY

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AND

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PREFACE

Here is my humble presentation of Shakespeare. At the outset, a word or two are perhaps necessary to show how I took upon myself this bold venture,—bold, because of the numerous books that are already in the market, and brought out by a long array of editors, publishers and commentators of Shakespeare. They are all good and useful in their way. But they do not come up to my idea of usefulness, and hence the present attempt. Let me hope that it will supply a long-felt want and may even serve as a model, tho' crude, for similar editions from abler hands.

About 40 years ago, I went to and stayed in England for over three years in connection with my study for the Bar. It was then my great good fortune to witness some—alas! only some—of the plays of Shakespeare beautifully staged and acted by well-known actors, Sir Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and others. The impression, their performances left on me, was deep and enduring. It made me pause in silent awe and wonder at the mighty mind of Shakespeare and all that is imparted or conveyed by his writings,—the instructive lessons and truths, the wit and wisdom, the varied experiences and sensations of man in different stages of his development, his instincts and emotions, in fact, the whole philosophy of human life,—in language quite Shakespearean in its range, volume, variety, force and flexibility. Naturally, I was filled with the desire to read all his works through; and to help me in the task, I wanted to have an edition of his works, with expressive illustrations, copious annotations and direct criticism of each play, showing its ethical spirit and significance. In my longing, I looked far and wide for such a copy. It was, and still is, my belief that an edition of this kind would enable one to enter into Shakespeare's mind and art and spirit, and to understand and imbibe the wholesome lessons and truths expounded by him. Ever since then, my search has been continuous and extensive, but alas! fruitless. For, I have not come across such an edition, analysing, explaining, illustrating and illuminating his plays.

Do we not realize the meaning, force and beauty of his plays all the more clearly, if we see them properly illustrated and explained; and more so, if they are well-staged and acted? Nature appears in a new light when presented in a new aspect, and so does Shakespeare. While we witness the acting, we feel as though we actually experience the various moods and aspects of life presented to us. Nay we ourselves feel the force, the intensity, and at times the tyranny of the passions that animate the characters of the play. Nor is this all. A sight or study of Shakespeare's pictures of diversified human life makes us so familiar with them that they constantly and pertinaciously dwell in our imagination. In fact, they become to us more palpable, real, breathing, living figures than even those of actual life. The latter touch and influence

us while we are in contact with them ; their sayings and doings dwell in our memory for a time only ; but Shakespeare's characters have an ever-present, ever-lasting life,—almost as eternal as the human race.

But realising what little chance there is for Indians, at least under the present circumstances, to see Shakespeare's plays well-staged and acted, it occurred to me to provide them, as the next best substitute, with suitable illustrations depicting each character, scene and situation. This will at least be helpful to younger minds and make for an easy and intelligent appreciation of the art, manner and style, in which the great poet has exhibited the play of almost all human passions, emotions and desires. Advanced students of Shakespeare may perhaps require nothing more than the bare, simple text. But, even to them, well-designed and well-executed illustrations are bound to come in as an aid, however slight, in the prosecution of their studies.

I have seen and handled any number of books on various subjects, grave and gay, for young and old, for students and scholars, copiously illustrated. Whether one turns to nursery books, story books, books of travel, commerce, history, science, religion, or to books of common folklore, one finds them mostly well-illustrated. Painting, drawing, etching, steel engraving, water colour, photography and all the resources of the Pictorial Art have been freely drawn upon. Even the common dailies, weeklies, monthlies, and other periodicals have also latterly taken to pictorial illustration. They now vie with one another in producing the best pictures or representations, not only of men and their achievements, but of animal and vegetable life, of Nature and her varied phenomena. But when I turn to Shakespeare,—the greatest poet and dramatist of the world who has treated of the elemental passions of man,—the ever-living topics of human life,—and note the paucity of pictorial illustrations in his works, as contrasted with the plethora of pictures and illustrations, in common papers and books, mostly of the commonplace incidents, affairs and activities of Life, it fills me with wonder at the extent of human eccentricity or apathy in some respects.

Illustrations of Shakespeare's Plays are no doubt to be seen, here and there, in some editions. But they are too meagre, too few, beside the mark, and too poor in quality and quantity. And yet we are all conscious of the value of good pictures in illustrating scenes and events. A good illustration, at a glance, is capable of impressing the mind with a tolerably faithful picture of the whole scene or situation represented. I have therefore tried to supply a long-felt want by illustrating, fully and copiously, tho' roughly by line drawings only, every scene and incident of the tragedy. Altogether, *sixty four full-page illustrations* are given in *Othello alone*.

Besides, a new plan is adopted and a new note of ethical value and suggestion is struck in this book. Owing to the vast and varied range, scope, energy, potency, and complexity of human passions as delineated by Shakespeare, a heterogeneous mass of critical literature has come into being, in reference to his works in general and to his tragedies in particular. Much of Shakespeare's mind and art will be missed, if the reader does not look deeper into his Plays and note the sparkling gems of wisdom,—morals and lessons of abiding interest hidden underneath. To this end, criticism is a valuable aid. Copious criticism is therefore given, or, as it has been here called, a critical and analytical study of each Act, in addition to the criticism given in the General Introduction. This critical and analytical study of each Act is altogether a novel and, it is hoped, a useful feature of the present work. I trust that the arrangement of the text under appropriate descriptive headings, the explanatory notes on each page, and the critical analysis after each Act, will be found more convenient and helpful than the methods adopted in similar works by others. In fact, the whole book may appear to be an innovation, distinct from its brethren in the field,—a wholesome innovation which, I hope, will commend itself to the readers generally.

The distinguishing features of this book are:—

- (1) An outline of the story, Act by Act, is given at the commencement of each Act.
- (2) Then comes the full page picture or pictorial illustration of the scene or incident depicted by Shakespeare.
- (3) This picture has a descriptive title at the top and a thought-provoking, moral aphorism or motto at the bottom, showing the drift of the picture. The reader is thus enabled, at a glance of the picture, to know the whole situation and the meaning underlying it. By merely turning over the pictures and reading their descriptive titles, one will gain a good idea of the whole play, and the story will be better impressed on the mind than the one given in bare print.
- (4) Opposite to the picture is arranged the text under appropriate headings, with meanings of difficult words and phrases and short critical notes, wherever needed, at the foot of the same page.
- (5) Every Act is followed by a critical and analytical study of the characters,—of the passions, emotions and feelings which animate them and are in fact the main-springs of all their actions,—of the incidents, scenes and situations in which they are placed, and of the results or developments that ensue in consequence.
- (6) The significance of each Act, where needed, is also treated of separately.
- (7) In the general Introduction is also given an Anthology of the extracts from reputed representatives of the different epochs of Shakespearean criticism.
- (8) Quotations or Select passages from the play are also given separately in one place at the end of the Introduction.

The study is thus rendered as thorough and exhaustive as possible. Textual criticism, dealing with different readings and emendations, is not included. It is, I consider, not altogether the end of criticism though a branch of it, and not a necessary guide to the understanding of the play by young minds.

I propose to bring out in a similar manner other tragedies also,—King Lear, Macbeth, Hamlet, and Julius Ceaser. ‘Othello’; now presented, is the first of the series. Others will follow in due course. I have therefore thought fit to dwell at some length on the function and progress of Drama, and of Tragedy in particular, under the ‘General Introduction’. It is designed as a preliminary introduction applicable to the series under projection. In the General Introduction, I have also taken the opportunity to give extracts of appreciations of Shakespeare by some of the great intellects,—poets, scholars, critics and exponents. Young minds will find it a convenient and valuable aid in properly understanding the Poet, to have the extracts marshalled in one place, rather than to have to wade through and get involved into a vast mass of critical literature.

I trust, better minds will hereafter take up the task and improve upon my work and method and make the pictures or pictorial illustrations more pleasing, apt, and artistic than I have been able to do *with the materials at my disposal*. It is intended primarily for the use and instruction of my countrymen, juveniles and grown-up students, and ultimately for all lovers of Shakespeare. In short, I consider this effort of mine as an humble offering to my fellow citizens, and as signalling my admiration of and homage to the world’s Great Teacher, in the hope that his teachings would reach a large number of my countrymen

Before concluding, I must express my indebtedness to the scholars and critics who have gone before me in the field and whose valuable works I have profitably consulted, also to the scholarly assistants whose services it has been my good fortune to secure in helping me to bring this book out. In this connection, I am glad to mention the name of Mr. S. Krishna Moorthy who filled up in time the breach made by the temporary absence of my collaborator and co-editor through his illness. I must also express my appreciation of the late artist, Mr. Vyasa Ram, who executed the line-drawings for me. I lament very much his recent death at Bombay; for, he was a promising Artist whose career has alas! been untimely cut short.

BANGALORE, }
APRIL 1928. }

RAM GOPAL.

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[Note: One critic exclaimed that a volume of jurisprudence could be made out of Shakespeare's works. Another was struck with the 'bead-roll of gems' and truths sparkling in them. A third one might lay emphasis on his greatness in inventing grand and telling expressions, similes and other figures of speech, etc. Some of these have been indicated here. I have also culled from this play a few proverbs, epigrams, and aphorisms, which lie thickly scattered in all his works. In addition, I have given 'Select Passages' from Othello. They are equally valuable by virtue of their grandeur of diction, richness of thought, facility and flexibility of expression, and the varied power, compass and range of human feelings, passions and emotions they deal with. I have thought fit to collect and give them in Special Introduction, as distinguished from the matters treated of in General Introduction]

PART I.

Some Figures of Speech, Epithets, etc., culled from 'Othello'

Close as oak; as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys, as salt as wolves in pride; fools as gross as ignorance made drunk; leaden thoughts; spite of hell, the fiend's arch mock; hobby-horse; well-painted passion; still as the grave; heavy hour; blacker devil, false as water; rash as fire; (you) lie to the heart; as ignorant as dirt; as liberal as the north (wind); precious villain; more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea; a daily beauty in his life; one entire and perfect chrysolite, unused to the melting mood; drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees their medicinal gum, the spirit-stirring drum; the ear-piercing fife; the plumed troop; the drowsy syrups of the world; past all surgery; potations potable deep, egregiously an ass; most lame and impotent conclusion; as luscious as locusts; as bitter as coloquintida; framed to make women false; a divided duty; the tyrant custom; blazoning pens; hair-breadth escapes; and let the labouring bark climb hills of seas Olympus-high, and duck again as low as Hell's from Heaven; declined into the vale of years; 'tis destiny unshunnable, like death, her stolen hours of lust, answer my waked wrath; dangerous conceits are, in their nature, poisons, and burn like the mines of sulphur; trifles light as air; confirmations strong, as proofs of holy writ; the ocular proof; tyrannous hate; a green-eyed monster, he plucked up kisses by the roots as if they grew upon my lips; this dream may help to thicken other proofs that do demonstrate thinly; they are ail but stomachs, and we all but food; they eat us hungrily, and when they are full, they belch us; some unhatch'd practice hath puddled his clear spirit; men are not gods; such observancy as fits the bridal; credulous tools; I clothe me in a forced content; a foregone conclusion; tho' that her jesses were my dear heart-strings, I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind to prey at fortune; a drop of patience; I had rather be a toad and live.....; the plague of great ones; prerogatives are they less than the base; it is my nature's plague to spy into abuses; nor build yourself a trouble out of my scattering and unsure observance, a false, disloyal knave; they're tricks of custom; thou mak'st his ear a stranger to thy thoughts; to steal away so guilty-like; I'll pour this pestilence into his ear, I'll turn her virtue into pitch, and out of her own goodness make the net that shall enmesh them all; the devils.....do suggest at first with heavenly shows; we work by wit, and not by witchcraft, and wit depends on dilatory time; fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,

PART II.

Some Proverbs, Epigrams and Aphorisms, from 'Othello'

1. But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at.
- 2 The wealthy, curled darlings of our nation.
3. The very head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.
4. Fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.
- 5 Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.
6. Dull not device by coldness and delay.
7. Take the safest occasion by the front.
8. He errs in ignorance, not in cunning
9. Weigh thy words before thou givest them breath
10. Men should be what they seem ;
 Or those that be not, would, they might seem none.
11. Poor and content is rich, and rich enough.
12. I saw Othello's visage in his mind.
13. I am not merry, but I do beguile,
 The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.
14. There is magic in the web of it.
15. Alas, my advocacy is not now in tune !
- 16 Bear your fortune like a man .
17. Keep time in all.
18. They laugh that win.
19. His words and performances are no kin together.
20. To devise engines (of destruction) for one's life.
21. Within reason and compass.
22. As you shall prove, so praise us.
23. Guiltiness will speak, though tongues were out of use.
- 24 Ah, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
 Justice to break her sword !
- 25 So sweet was never so fatal.
26. 'This sorrow's heavenly, it strikes where it doth love.
27. Take heed of perjury, thou art on thy death-bed.
28. Cassio, not killed? Then murder is out of tune,
 And sweet revenge grows harsh.
29. An honest man he is, and hates the slime
 That sticks on filthy deeds.
30. She's like a liar, gone to burning hell
31. The sweetest innocent that ever did lift up eye.
32. Are there no stones in heaven, but what serve for the thunder?
33. Why should honour out-live honesty ?
34. When I love thee not, chaos is come again.
 Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,
 Nor set down aught in malice ; then must you speak
- 35 Of one that loved, not wisely, but too well ;
 That threw a pearl away, richer than all his tribe.
36. I'm nothing, if not critical.
37. Othello's occupation's gone !

PART III.

EPIGRAMMATIC SAYINGS.

(A Bead-roll of gems, truths, etc.)

Book-worm :—

Unless (it be) the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose as masterly as he :
Mere prattle without practice is all his soldiership.

Preferment :—

Preferment goes by lotter and affection,
And not by old gradation.

Masters and Servants, (fidelity impossible with all masters):—

We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly followed.

Advice (good) :—

You are one of those that will not serve God, if the devil bid you.

Punishment :—

(a) My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

(b) Let loose on me the justice of the State
For thus deluding you.

(ACT I)

A punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one
would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion.

(ACT II.)

Madness :—

And now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come to start my quiet.

Conscience :—

(a) Do not believe that, from the sense of civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.

(b) Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience.
To do no contrived murder

(c) My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly.

Hypocrisy :—

Tho' I do hate him, as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love.

Divinity of hell! when devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows. (ACT II)

4. [PT. III.] SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

Old Age, Respect to,—

You shall more command with years,
Than with your weapons.

Discretion :—

Let's teach ourselves that honorable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.

(ACT II.)

My Services :—

My services.....shall out-tongue his complaints.

Prejudice (of birth, race, or caste) :—

For, if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

Imprudence :—

Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.

Grief :—

He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he bears.
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.

Grief (bootless) :—

The robb'd that smiles, steals something from the thief ;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Reconciliation :—

Take up this mangled matter at the best.
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

Resignation :—

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.

Pining :—

To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

Patience :—

What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,
Patience, her injury, a mockery makes.
How poor are they that have not patience !
What wound did ever heal but by degrees ?

(ACT II.)

Words, (have little consoling power) :—

But words are words ; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.

Opinion (public) :—

Yet, opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer
voice on you.

Habit —

The tyrant custom hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down.

Judgment (lies in the mind) —

I saw Othello's visage in his mind.

Character (better than colour) —

If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

Time —

We must obey the time.
There are many events, in the womb of time, which will be delivered.

Conspiracy —

Hell and Night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

Knavery —

Knavery's plain face is never seen till used.

ACT II.**Love :—**

Base men, being in love, have then a nobility in their nature more
than is native to them.

When I love thee not, chaos is come again. (ACT III.)

I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapor of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. (ACT III.)

Jealousy :—

Yet that I put the Moor at least into a jealousy so strong
That Judgment cannot cure. (ACT II.)

Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? (ACT III.)

It comes over my memory
As doth the raven over the infected house
Boding to all. (ACT IV.)

Oft my jealousy shapes faults that are not.

O, beware, my lord, of jealousy !
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock
The meat it feeds on. (ACT III.)

But jealous souls will not be answer'd so,
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous, for they are jealous : 'tis a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself,

Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind !

.. ...

Trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ.

.....

Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons
Which,... with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur.

(ACT III)

Drink :—

I could well wish Courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil !

O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains, that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts !

Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil.

Planning and Hoping :—

If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Military Talents :—

He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction.

Good Nature :—

His good nature prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio, and looks not on his evils.

Threat :—

He that stirs next, to carve for his own rage,
Holds his soul light ; he dies upon his motion.

Self-Defence (a natural instinct) —

Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,
And to defend ourselves be a sin,
When violence assails us.

Passion (rising) :—

My blood begins my safer guides to rule.

Human Weakness :—

But men are men ; the best sometimes forget.

Anger :—

As men in rage strike those that wish them best.

.....

It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil
wrath : one imperfectness shows me another.

Reputation :—

I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is
bestial. My reputation, Iago, my reputation !

Good name in man and woman,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse, steals trash.....
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed.

(ACT III)

Generous Nature .—

She is framed as fruitful as the free elements.

Lesson, (from bitter experience) —

I shall I have so much experience for my pains ; and so, with no
money at all, and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

Pleasure and Action .—

Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.

Delay .—

Dull not device by coldness and delay.

ACT III.**Importunity —**

I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience,
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift.

Ill at ease :—

I am very ill at ease,
(And so) unfit for my own purposes.

Insinuation —

By Heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown.

Tricks of Custom .—

For, such things, in a false, disloyal knave, are tricks of custom.

Honest Men .—

Men should be what they seem.
Or those that be not, would, they might seem none.

My thoughts are my own :—

Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.

Foul Things :—

As where's that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not ?

Theft (of money) :—

Who steals my purse, steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.

Suspicion (of a jealous husband):—

But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves.

Content —

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough ;
 But riches, fineless, is as poor as winter
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor.

Decision .—

To be once in doubt is once to be resolved.
 I'll see before I doubt , when I doubt, prove.

Virtue Adorned .—

Where virtue is, these (singing, playing, dancing) are more virtuous.

Her Falsehood (incredible):—

If she be false, O, then, Heaven mocks itself !
 I'll not believe it.

Suspense .—

Thou hast set me on the rack:
 I swear 'tis better to be much abused
 Than but to know't a little.

Loss, (not known, is no loss).—

He that is robbed, not wanting what is stolen,
 Let him not know't, and he is not robbed at all.

Pathetic Despair .—

O, now, for ever, farewell the tranquil mind ! farewell content !.....

Proof:—

So prove it, that the probation bears no hinge nor loop
 To hang a doubt on.

Weak Minds :—

There are a kind of men so loose of soul
 That, in their sleep, will mutter their affairs.

Threat :—

Villain, be sure, thou prove my love a whore,.....
 If thou dost slander her and torture me,
 Never pray more.

Revenge :—

O, that the slave had forty thousand lives !
 One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
 I would have him nine years a-killing.

.....

Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge
 Had stomach for them all.

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell !
 Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
 'To tyrannous hate ! Swell bosom, with thy fraught,
 For, 'tis of aspics' tongues !

Folly :—

O wretched fool, that livest to make thine honesty a vice !

Wedlock (false) —

The hearts, of old, gave hands,
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

Untimely Pleading .—

Alas ! my advocacy is not now in tune !

Worry (official) .—

In such cases, men's natures wrangle with inferior things though
great ones are their object.

Sympathetic Action :—

For, let our finger ache, and it induces
Our other healthful members even to that sense.

Human Weakness :—

We must think, men are not Gods,
Nor of them look for such observancy as fits the bridal.

Absent Hours (with lovers) .—

And lovers' absent hours,.....O weary reckoning !

ACT IV.**A Wife's Honor:—**

She is protectress of her honor too.

Gullibility:—

Thus credulous fools are caught!
And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
All guiltless, meet reproach!

Success:—

They laugh that win.

A wife's accomplishments:—

O, the world hath not a sweeter creature ! She might lie by an
emperor's side and command him tasks.....I do but say what she is,
—so delicate with her needle. an admirable musician. O, she will
sing the savageness out of a bear : of so high and plenteous wit and
invention.

Firmness:—

Is this the nature whom passion could not shake ?
Whose solid virtue, the shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce ?

Cursed Slanderers :—

O Heaven, that such companions thou'dst unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world
Even from the east to the west !

Constancy (of a chaste wife) —

Unkindness may do much, and his unkindness may defeat my life
But never taint my love.

Double Game —

Your words and performances are no kin together.

A Noble Prayer :—

Heaven me such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend.

ACT V.

Incongruity —

So sweet was never so fatal.

Heavenly Sorrow —

This sorrow is heavenly, it strikes where it doth love.

Unnatural Death —

That Death is unnatural that kills for loving

The Crisis .—

This is the night that either makes me or foedoes me quite.

If Faithful —

Nay, had she been true,
If Heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it.

.....

Miscellaneous,—

An honest man he is and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

.....

Villainy hath made mocks with love.

.....

The sweetest innocent that ever did lift up eye.

.....

No, I will speak as lib'ral as the north

.....

Are there no stones in heaven but what serve for thunder ?

.....

Who can control his fate ?

.....

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

.....

I'd have thee live; for, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.

.....

(Call me) An honorable murderer, if you will,
For nought did I in hate, but all in honor,

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3. Accusation and Remonstrance,
4. Admiration.
5. Adultery.
6. Alarm.
7. Anger.
8. Appearance (deceitful).
9. Aristocratic Father's feelings.

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15. Chiding.
16. Chuckling and Gloating (of Malice).
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- 76. Tears (crocodile).
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- 79. Villain Vs. Fool.
- 80. Villain's view of Philosophy (perverted to suit his own ends).
- 81. Vindication.

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- 82. Wickedness, (describing women.)
- 83. Wrongs.

PART IV.

SELECT PASSAGES (from 'Othello')

(WITH HEADINGS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.)

1. ABSENCE.

Bia : What! keep a week away? seven days and nights? Eight score eight hours? and lovers' absent hours, more tedious than the dial eight score times? O weary reckoning! (Act III, sc 4.)

2. ACCUSATION (answered).

Iago falsely implicates and accuses Bianca who comes there,—

Bia : O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

Iago : O notable strumpet! (To Cas) Cassio, may you suspect who they should be that have thus mangled you?

.....

Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash (Bianca)
To be a party in this injury.
Patience awhile, good Cassio. Come, come,
Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?
Alas, my friend and my dear countryman
Roderigo? no—yes, sure,—O Heaven!—Roderigo.

(Seeing Gra.) Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners
That so neglected you. * * *
'll fetch the general's surgeon...
He that lies slain here, Cassio!, was my dear friend;
What malice was between you?

Cas : None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago : Stay you, good gentlemen. (To Bia.) Look you pale, mistress?
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?
Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon
Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her.
Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Tho' tongues were out of use.

.....

This is the fruit of whoring. Prithee, Emilia,
Go, know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night.
(To Bia.) What, do you shake at that?

Bia : He supp'd at my house; but I therefore shake not.

Iago : O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Emil : Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!

Bia : I am no strumpet; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me,

(Act V, sc. 1)

3. ACCUSATION and REMONSTRANCE.

Des : I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth : O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would, thou hadst ne'er been born !

Des Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed ?

Oth Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write 'whore' upon ? What committed !
Committed ! O thou public commoner !
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed !
Heaven stops the nose at it; and the moon winks;
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it. What committed !
Impudent strumpet !

Des : No, as I am a Christian :
If to preserve this vessel for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

(ACT IV, SC. 2)

4. ADMIRATION.

Othello, deluded into admiring Iago's character,

Oth This honest creature doubtless
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds,

This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealings.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

5 ADULTERY.

(a) *Adultery in Venice,—*

In Venice, they do let Heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(b) *The character of an adulterous woman,—*

A housewife that, by selling her desires,
Buys herself bread and clothes : (ACT IV, SC. 1)

(c) *Adultery, impossibility of direct proof of,—*

But, how? how satisfied, my lord ?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on,

Behold her topp'd?What then? how then?
 What shall I say? Where's satisfaction?
 It is imposible you should see this,
 Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
 As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
 As ignorance made drunk But yet, I say,
 If imputation and strong circumstances,
 Which lead directly to the door of truth,
 Will give you satisfaction, you may have't

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(d) Impure, foul thoughts in pure minds,—

As where's that palace whereinto foul things
 Sometimes intrude not? Who has a breast so pure,
 But some uncleanly apprehensions
 Keep leets and law-days, and in session sit
 With meditations lawful ?

(ACT III, SC. 3)

6. ALARM

How to create alarm, and poison one's delight,—

(1) **Iago** (To Rod.) Call up her father,
 Rouse him make after him, poison his delight,
 Proclaim him in the streets ; incense her kinsmen ,
 And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
 Plague him with flies though that his joy be joy,
 Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
 As it may lose some colour.

Rod : Here is her father's house ; I'll call aloud.

Iago : Do, with like tumorous accent and dire yell,
 As when, by night and negligence, the fire
 Is spied in populous cities.

Rod : What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho !

Iago : Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
 Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
 Thieves! thieves!

(ACT I, SC. 1)

* * *

Arise, arise; awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
 Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you;
 Arise, I say.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) **Iago**. (Aside to Rod.) Away, I say; go out and cry a mutiny. [*Exit Rod.*
 Nay, good lieutenant! God's will, gentlemen!
 Help, ho!—Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—sir;—
 Help, masters!—Here's a goodly watch indeed! [*A bell rings.*
 Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!
 The town will rise: God's will, lieutenant, hold;
 You will be shamed for ever.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

7. ANGER.

(1) Othello begins to get angry with the night-brawlers,—

Oth : Now, by Heaven,
 My blood begins my safer guides to rule,
 And passion, having my best judgment collied,
 Assays to lead the way' if I once stir,
 Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
 Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
 How this foul rout began, who set it on;
 And he that is approved in this offence,
 Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
 Shall lose me What! in a town of war,
 Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,
 To manage private and domestic quarrel,
 In night, and on the court and guard of safety!
 'Tis monstrous. Iago, who began't ?

(ACT II, SC. 3)

2) Anger knows not friend from foe,—

— Iago Men, in rage, strike those that wish them best. (ACT II, SC. 3.)

(3) Othello's outburst of righteous anger against Iago,—

Oth : (Clutching Iago by the throat)
 Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ,
 Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof;
 Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,
 Thou hadst been better born a dog
 Than answer my waked wrath!

Iago: Is't come to this?—

Oth : Make me to see't; or, at the least, so prove it,
 That the probation bears no hinge nor loop
 To hang a doubt on; or, woe upon thy life!

Iago: My noble lord,—

Oth : If thou dost slander her and torture me,
 Never pray more; abandon all remorse;
 On horror's head horrors accumulate;
 Do deeds to make Heaven weep, all earth amazed;
 For, nothing canst thou to damnation add
 Greater than that.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(4) Iago, on Othello's anger,—

 Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon,
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air,
 And, like the devil, from his very arm
 Puff'd his own brother; and can he be angry?
 Something of moment then. I will go meet him:
 There's matter in't indeed if he be angry.

(ACT III, SC. 4)

8 APPEARANCE (Deceitful).

Deceitful appearance, friendly outside, but false at heart.

(1) **Iago** Others there are
 Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
 Do well thrive by them; and when they have lined their coats,
 Do themselves homage these fellows have some soul,
 And such a one do I profess myself. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) **Iago:** Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
 Yet for necessity of present life,
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(3) **Oth.** (To Des.) O thou weed,
 Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,
 That the sense aches at thee.....

* * *

Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
 Made to write 'whore' upon? (ACT IV, SC. 2)

9 ARISTOCRATIC FATHER'S FEELINGS.

(1) **Brabantio's rebuff to the informer (Roderigo),—**

Bra: I have charged thee not to hunt about my doors.
 In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
 'My daughter is not for thee'; and now, in madness,
 Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
 Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
 To start my quiet.

* * *

But thou must needs be sure
 My spirit and my place have in them power
 To make this bitter to thee. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) **His distraction on discovering his loss,—**

Bra: It is too true an evil; gone she is;
 And what's to come of my despised time
 Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
 Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
 With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father!
 How didst thou know 'twas she? O, she deceives me
 Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers.
 Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think you?

Red: Truly, I think they are.

Bra: O Heaven! How got she out? O treason of the blood!
 Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds

By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Rodenigo,
Of some such thing?

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(3) **Abusive and insulting to Othello who is cool and forbearing,—**

Oth: Keep up your bright swords, for, the dew will rust them.
Good Signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

Bra: O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For, I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound:
Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,—
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,—
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(4) **His superstitious beliefs about magic and drugs; his arrogant threat,—**

Bra: (To Self) Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion: I'll have't disputed on;
'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.

(To Oth.) I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of Arts inhibited and out of warrant.
Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(5) **An Aristocrat's idea of kinship of feeling among his class.**

Bra: Bring him away!
Mine's not an idle cause: the Duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the State,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;

(6) **Racial pride and prejudice,—**

For, if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

(ACT I, SC. 2.)

(7) **Complaint to the Duke against Othello,—**

Bra: She is abused, stolen from me and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks;
For nature so preposterously to err,—
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,—
Sans witchcraft could not be.

* * *

A maiden never bold;
Of Spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she,—inspite of nature,

Of years, of country, credit, everything,—
 To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on !
 It is a Judgment main'd and most imperfect,
 That will confess perfection so could err
 Against all rules of nature ; and must be driven
 To find out practices of cunning Hell,
 Why this should be.

I therefore vouch again,
 That, with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
 Or with some dram conjured to this effect,
 He wrought upon her.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(8) His request to hear his daughter's version,—

Bra : I pray you, hear her speak :
 If she confess that she was half the wooer,
 Destruction on my head if my bad blame
 Light on the man ! Come hither, gentle mistress :
 Do you perceive in all this noble company
 Where most you owe obedience ?

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(9) His feelings of disgust and threat of tyrannical behaviour,—

Bra : God be with you ! I have done.
 Please it your grace, on to the State affairs :
 I had rather to adopt a child than get it.
 Come hither, Moor :
 I here do give thee that with all my heart,
 Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
 I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,
 I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
 For, thy escape would teach me tyranny,
 To hang clogs on them. I have done, my lord.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(10) His excited feelings, not easily calmed by sage advice,—

Bra : So, let the Turk, of Cyprus us beguile ;
 We lose it not so long as we can smile.
 He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
 But the free comfort which from thence he hears ;
 But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
 That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
 These sentences, to sugar or to gall,
 Being strong on both sides, are equivocal
 But words are words ; I never yet did hear
 That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.
 I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of State. (ACT I, SC. 3)

(11) His parting kick at her daughter,—

Bra : Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see ;
 She has deceived her father, and may thee.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

10. BOASTING.

Oth : 'Tis yet to know—
 Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
 I shall promulgate—I fetch my life and being

From men of royal siege, and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

11 BOON (or favour).

On Othello consenting to let Cassio come at will,—

Des : Why, this is not a boon ;
'Tis as I should entreat you ' wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm ',
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person . nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight,
And fearful to be granted.

Oth : I will deny thee nothing.

(ACT III, SC. 3.)

12. CAUSATION.

More charitable than truthful,—

Des : Something sure of State,—
Either from Venice some unhatch'd practice
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,—
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and, in such cases,
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so:
Foi, let our finger ache, and it indues
Our other healthful members even to that sense
Of pain: Nay, we must think ' men are not gods ';
Nor of them look for such observancy
As fits the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,
I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,
Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,
And he's indicted falsely.

Emil : Pray Heaven, it be State-matters, as you think,
And no conception, nor jealous toy,
Concerning you.

(ACT III, SC. 4.)

13 CHANGE.

Surprise at the sudden change in Othello :—

Lod . Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in-all sufficient ? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake ? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce ?

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

14. CHASTITY and HONOR.

(1) On Desdemona's chastity,—

Oth : If she be false, O, then, Heaven mocks itself !
I'll not believe't.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(2) Honor of a wife,—

She is protectress of her honor too :
May she give that ?

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(3) Protestation of her honor by a wife,—

Des : If to preserve this vessel for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

(ACT IV, SC. 2)

(4) Emilia's vindication of Desdemona's chastity,—

I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake : if you think other,
Remove your thought ; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head,
Let Heaven requite it with the serpent's curse !
For, if she be not honest, chaste and true,
There's no man happy ; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

(ACT IV, SC. 2)

(5) Do women abuse their husbands by their unchastity?—

Des : O, these men, these men !
Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind ?

Emil : There be some such ; no question.

Des : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil : Why, would not you ?

Des : No, by this Heavenly light !

Emil : Nor I neither by this Heavenly light ;
I might do't as well i' the dark.

(ACT IV, SC. 3)

(6) The world is ready to commit crimes for huge profit or gain,—

Des : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil : The world's a huge thing : it is a great price
For a small vice.

Des : In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Emil : In troth, I think I should ; and undo't when I had done. Marry,
I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of
lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition ;
but, for the whole world,—why, who would not make her husband
a cuckold to make him a monarch ? I should venture purgatory for't.

Des : Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong for the whole world.

Emil : Why, the wrong is but a wrong i'the world : and having the
world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you
might quickly make it right.

(ACT IV, SC. 3)

15. CHIDING.**Mild chiding, needed for a sensitive soul,—**

Those that do teach young babes,
Do it with gentle means and easy tasks :
He might have chid me so ; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

(ACT IV, SC. 2)

16 CHUCKLING & GLOATING (of Malice.)

Malignity, with its heartless chuckle over human suffering,—

Work on, my medicine, work !
 Thus credulous fools are caught ;
 And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
 All guiltless, meet reproach. (*Iago, at Othell's swooning*)
 (ACT IV, SC. 1)

17. COMFORT.

(1) Precious little comfort to one, eaten up with passion,—

Iago : How is it, General ? Have you not hurt your head ?
Oth : Dost thou mock me ?
Iago : I mock you ! No, by Heaven
 Would, you would bear your fortune like a man !
Oth : A horned man's a monster and a beast.
Iago : There's many a beast then in a populous city,
 And many a civil monster.
Oth : Did he confess it ?
Iago : Good sir, be a man ;
 Think every bearded fellow, that's but yoked,
 May draw with you : there's millions now alive
 That nightly lie in those unproper beds
 Which they dare swear peculiar : your case is better. (ACT IV, SC. 1)

(2) If I love him not, comfort forswear me,—

Des : O good Iago,
 What shall I do to win my lord again ?.....
 If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
 Either in discourse of thought or actual deed ;
 Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
 Delighted them in any other form,
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will,—tho' he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,
 Comfort forswear me !
 (ACT IV, SC. 2)

18. CONFESSION* (Candid).

(1) Confession of Othello,—

- (a) **Oth** : For, know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my unhoused free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine
 For the sea's worth. (ACT I, SC. 2)
- (b) **Oth** : That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
 It is most true ; true, I have married her :
 The very head and front of my offending
 Hath this extent, no more..... (ACT I, SC. 3)
- (c) **Oth** : And till she come, as truly as to Heaven
 I do confess the vices of my blood,

So, justly, to your grave ears, I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love
And she in mine.....

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(2) Desdemona's Confession,

Des: That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdued
Even to the very quality of my lord.
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(3) Roderigo's Confession,—

Rod What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond;
but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(4) Othello, (on himself), in answer to Lodovico's Question,—

Lod: O thou Othello, that wert once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,
What shall be said to thee?

Oth: Why, any thing;
An honourable murderer, if you will;
For, nought did I in hate, but all in honour.

(ACT V, SC. 2)

19. CONFIDENCE or TRUST.

(1) Duke: Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you,.....

Oth: So please your Grace, my Ancient,—
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good Grace shall think
To be sent after me.

.....

Honest Iago, my Desdemona must I leave to thee;
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(2) Oth: I prithee, good Iago,
Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.

(ACT II, SC. 1)

(3) Iago: You see this fellow (Cassio) that is gone before:
He is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar
And give direction: and do but see his vice.

... ..

I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

.....

- Mon : 'Twere well, the General were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not, or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils..... (ACT II, Sc. 3)
- (4) Oth . I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio. (ACT II, Sc. 3)
-
- (5) Oth : I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will, upon the instant, put thee to it.
* ^ + Now art thou my lieutenant.
- Iago . I am your own for ever. (ACT III Sc. 3)
- (6) Oth Ay, 'twas he that told me first:
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.
- Emi . My husband !
- Oth What needs this iteration, woman ?.....
I say, thy husband dost understand the word ?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.
-
- Emi : O gull ! O dolt ! As ignorant as dirt ! (ACT V, Sc. 2)

20. CONSCIENCE.

(1) Its silent whispers,—

Iago . (*Aside*) This is the night
That either makes me or fordoes me quite. (ACT V, Sc. 1)

(2) Its reflections on the cause or motive,—

Oth : It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul .
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars !
It is the cause. Yet, I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet, she must die ; else, she'll betray more men. (ACT V, Sc. 2)

(3) On the two lights,—

Oth : If I quench thee, thou flaming minister !
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me ; but once put out thy light,
Thou eunning'st pattern of exelling nature !
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume. When I have pluck'd the rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again ;
It must needs wither . I'll smell it on the tree. (ACT V, Sc. 2)

(4) Vacillating, kissing and weeping,—

Oth : Ah, balmy breath ! that dost almost persuade
Justice to brak her sworn ! One more, one more :

Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee
 And love thee after : Once more, and this the last :
 So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
 But they are cruel tears : this sorrow's heavenly ;
 It strikes where it doth love. She wakes. (ACT V, SC. 2)

(5) Asking Desdemona to say her last prayers,—

Oth . Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?
 Des : Ay, my lord.
 Oth : If you bethink yourself of any crime
 Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,
 Solicit for it straight.
 Des . Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that ?
 Oth : Well, do it, and be brief : I will walk by .
 I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;
 No ; Heaven forbid ! I would not kill thy soul.....
 Think on thy sins.
 Des : They are loves I bear to you
 Oth : Ay, and for that thou diest. (ACT V, SC. 2)

(6) Getting obdurate and heedless of remonstrances,—

Des : That death's unnatural that kills for loving
 Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip ?
 Some bloody passion shakes your very frame :
 These are portents ; but yet I hope, I hope,
 They do not point on me.
 Oth : Sweet soul, take heed,
 Take heed of perjury ; thou art on thy death-bed.
 Des : Ay, but not yet to die.....I never did
 Offend you in my life , never loved Cassio
 But with such general warranty of Heaven
 As I might love : I never gave him token.
 Oth : By Heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.
 O perjured woman ! thou dost stone my heart,
 And makest me call what I intend to do
 A murder, which I thought a sacrifice ;
 I saw the handkerchief.
 Des : He found it then ;
 I never gave it him ; send for him hither ;
 Let him confess a truth.
 * * *
 Alas, he is betray'd and I undone !
 Oth : Out, strumpet ! weep'st thou for him to my face ? [Stifles her.
 (ACT V, SC. 2)

(7) Reflections, after the murder.—

Emil : (*Within*) O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you !
 Oth : Yes, 'tis Emilia. By and by. She's dead.
 'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death,
 The noise was here. Hal no more moving ?

Still as the grave! Shall she come in? Were't good?
 I think she stirs again. No What's best to do?
 If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife.
 My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife.
 O, insupportable! O heavy hour!
 Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
 Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe
 Should yawn at alteration.

(ACT V, SC. 2)

21. CONTENTMENT.

Iago: Poor and content is rich, and rich enough;
 But riches, fineless, is as poor as winter
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
 Good Heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy!

(ACT III, SC. 3)

22. CORRUPTION (social).

Society, its corruptions and false conventions,—

- (1) **Iago** I know our country—disposition well;
 In Venice, they do let Heaven see the pranks
 They dare not show their husbands;
 Their best conscience is,—not to leave't undone,
 But keep't unknown. (ACT III, SC. 3)
- (2) **Oth** (If so) I am abused, and my relief
 Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
 And not their appetites!.....Would, I were satisfied. (ACT III, SC. 3)
- (3) **Iago:** What, to kiss in private?
Oth: An unauthorized kiss.
Iago: Or, to be naked with her friend in bed
 An hour or more,—not meaning any harm?
Oth: Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!
 It is hypocrisy against the devil:
 They that mean virtuously and yet do so,
 The devil their virtue tempts and they tempt Heaven. (ACT IV, SC. 1)
- (4) **Iago:** There's many a beast, then, in a populous city,
 And many a civil monster.....Good sir, be a man;
 Think every bearded fellow, that's but yoked,
 May draw with you: there's millions now alive
 That nightly lie in those unproper beds
 Which they dare swear peculiar: your case is better.
 O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
 To lip a wanton in a secure couch
 And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
 And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be. (ACT IV, SC. 1)

23. COURAGE.

(a) **In desperation,—**

Iago: Base men, being in love, have then a nobility in their natures,
 more than is native to them. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(b) In war,—

Iago . Can he be angry ? I have seen the cannon,
When it hath blown his ranks into the air,
And, like the devil, from his very arm
Puff'd his own brother ; and can he be angry ?
Something of moment then . I will go meet him.
There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry. (ACT III, Sc. 4)

24. DECISION, or DETERMINATION

Away with love or jealousy, when her guilt is proved,—

Oth : Why, why is this ?
Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions ? No ; to be once in doubt
Is once to be resolved : exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference.....No, Iago ;
I'll see before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove ;
And on the proof, there is no more but this,
Away at once with love or jealousy ! (ACT III, Sc. 3)

25. DESPAIR and ENCOURAGEMENT.

Roderigo is sick of life, but Iago tries to brace him up,—

Rod : I will incontinently drown myself.
Iago : If thou dost, I shall never love thee after.
Why, thou silly gentleman !
Rod : It is silliness to live, when to live is torment : and then have we a
prescription to die, when Death is our physician.
Iago : O villanous ! I have looked upon the world for four times seven
years ; and since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an
injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I
would say I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I
would change my humanity with a baboon.
Rod : What should I do ? I confess it is my shame to be so fond ; but it
is not in my virtue to mend it.
Iago : Virtue ! a fig ! * * * Come, be a man : drown
thyself ! drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy
friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of
perdurable toughness : I could never better stead thee than now.
Put money in thy purse ; follow thou the wars : defeat thy
favour with an usurped beard ; I say, put money in thy purse. *
* * She must change for youth : when she is sated with
his body, she will find the error of her choice . she must change,
she must : therefore, put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needl
damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make an
the money thou canst. If sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt asl

erring Barbarian and a super-subtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her ; therefore, make money. A pox of drowning thyself ! it is clean out of the way : seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her. (ACT I, SC. 3)

26. DISCRETION.

(It dictates caution and sets limits to feasting, etc.)

Oth : Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night ;
Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to outsport discretion.

Cas : Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

27. DISMISSAL and CAUTION.

Othello, impressed by Iago's account, dismisses Cassio ,—

Oth . I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee ;
But never more be officer of mine.....
I'll make thee an example.....
Iago, look with care about the town,
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

28. DRINK and DRUNKARDS.

(1) Inducements to drink,—

Iago : Come, Lieutenant, I have a stoup of wine ; and here, without, are a brace of Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello.

Cas : Not to-night, good Iago : I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking . I could well wish, Courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago : O, they are our friends ; but one cup . I'll drink for you.

Cas . I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too ; and behold, what innovation it makes here ; I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago : What, man ! 'tis a night of revels : the gallants desire it.

Cas : Where are they ?

Iago : Here at the door ; I pray you, call them in.

Cas : I'll do't ; but it dislikes me. (*Goes out and returns*)

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(2) A Drink Song,—

- (1) And let me the canakin clink, clink,
 And let me the canakin clink :
 A soldier's a man ;
 A life's but a span ;
 Why, then, let a soldier drink.

(2) King Stephen was.....(*Vide Page 110 of the Text*)

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(3) Probable effects of Drink (*as contemplated by Iago*),—

Iago : If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
 With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
 He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
 As my young mistress' dog
 Now, my sick fool Roderigo,
 Whom love hath turned almost the wrong side out,
 To Desdemona hath to-night caroused
 Potations pottle-deep ; and he's to watch :
 Three lads of Cyprus,—noble swelling spirits,
 That hold their honours in a wary distance,—
 The very elements of this warlike isle,—
 Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
 And they watch too
 Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards,
 Am I to put our Cassio in some action
 That may offend the isle But here they come :
 If consequence do but approve my dream,
 My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream. (ACT II, SC. 3)

(4) The drinking habits of some people,—

Iago : I learned that song in England, where indeed they are most
 potent in potting : your Dane, your German, and your swagbellied
 Hollander,—Drink, ho !—are nothing to your English.

Cas : Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking ?

Iago : Why, he drinks you with facility your Dane dead drunk ; he
 sweats not, to overthrow your Almain ; he gives your Hollander a
 vomit ere the next pottle can be filled.

(5) A drunkard's frothy talk and unsteady behaviour,—

Cas : I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well :
 God's above all ; and there be souls must be saved, and there be
 souls must not be saved.....For mine own part—no offence to the
 general, nor any man of quality—I hope to be saved.....Let's have
 no more of this ; let's (look) to our affairs. God forgive us our sins !
 Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I
 am drunk : this is my Ancient . this is my right hand, and this
 is my left. I am not drunk now ; I can stand well enough and
 speak well enough. (ACT II, SC. 3)

(6) How Drink opens the door to complaints and accusations by others,—

Iago : He is a soldier fit to stand by Cæsar
 And give direction : and do but see his vice ;

'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other · 'tis pity of him.
I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mon : But is he often thus ?.....It were well
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not, or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio
And looks not on his evils · is not this true?.....
And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity :
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor

Iago : Not I, for this fair island :
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of this evil.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(7) A drunkard, ready to take offence and fight,—

(Cassio is seen driving in Roderigo).

Cas : 'Zounds ! you rogue ! you rascal !

Mon : What's the matter, lieutenant ?

Cas : A knave teach me my duty ! But I'll beat the knave into a wicker bottle.

Rod : Beat me !

Cas : Dost thou prate, rogue ? *(Striking Roderigo)*

Mon : Nay, good lieutenant ; I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

Cas : Let me go, sir, or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mon : Come, come, you're drunk

Cas : Drunk ! *(Cassio and Montano fight.)*

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(8) An honest man's abhorrence of Drink,—

Cas : Drunk ? and speak parrot ? and squabble ? swagger ? swear ?
and discourse fustian with one's own shadow ? O thou invisible
spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee
devil ! * * *

I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly ; a quarrel,
but nothing wherefore. O God, that men should put an enemy in
their mouths to steal away their brains ! that we should, with joy,
pleasance, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts !.....

I will ask him for my place again ; he shall tell me I am a
drunkard ! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would
stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and
presently a beast ! O strange ! Every inordinate cup is unblest,
and the ingredient is a devil.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(9) Recovery from the effects of Drink, followed by disillusionment,—

Iago : Why, but you are now well enough: how came you thus recovered?

Cas : It hath pleased the devil Drunkenness to give place to the devil

Wrath one imperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly
despise myself

(10) A villain's vindication of Drink,—

Iago Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well
used : exclaim no more against it. * * * Come, you
are too severe a moralist as the time, the place and the condition
of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not
befallen ; but since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.....You,
or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. (ACT II, SC. 3)

29. DUTY.

Desdemona, on her divided duty,—

Des. My noble father, I do perceive here a divided duty
To you, I am bound for life and education ;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty
I am hitherto your daughter. But here's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord. (ACT I, SC. 3)

Othello, on his duty,—

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave Senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down : I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness ; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites,
Most humbly, therefore, bending to your State,
I crave fit disposition for my wife,
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding ; (ACT I, SC. 3)

30. EXPLOITATION.

(1) Of good but trustful men,—

- (a) He holds me well :
The better shall my purpose work on him. (ACT I, SC. 3)
- (b) The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so ;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose as asses are. (ACT I, SC. 3)
- (c) I shall make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(2) Of fools and simpletons,—

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse ;
For, I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,

If I would time expend with such a snipe
 But for my sport and profit..... (ACT I SC. 3)
 Work on, my medicine, work !
 Thus credulous fools are caught .
 And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
 All guiltless, meet reproach. (ACT IV, SC. 1)

31. FAITHLESSNESS, (Conjugal)

If proved false, she shall be discarded and loathed,—

Oth : If I do prove her haggard,
 Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
 I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind
 To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black
 And have not those soft parts of conversation
 That chamberers have ; or, for I am declined
 Into the vale of years,—yet that's not much—
 She's gone ; I am abused, and my relief
 Must be to loathe her (ACT III, SC. 3)

Gravity of the crime of nuptial treachery,—

O thou public commoner !
 I should make very forges of my cheeks,
 That would to cinders burn up modesty,
 Did I but speak thy deeds—What committed !
 Heaven stops the nose at it ; and the moon winks ;
 The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
 Is bush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
 And will not hear it. What Committed !
 Impudent strumpet ! (ACT. IV, SC. 2)

32. FAREWELL

Pathetic farewell of a mind torn by Jealousy,—

O, now, for ever
 Farewell the tranquil mind ! farewell content !
 Farewell the plumed troop and the big wars
 That make ambition virtue ! O, farewell,
 Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump,
 The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
 The royal banner and all quality,
 Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war !
 And, O you mortal engines, whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
 Farewell ! Othello's occupation's gone ! (ACT III, SC. 3)

33. FREEDOM.

Not bound to utter my thoughts,—

Oth : I prithee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
 As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts
 The worst of words.
 Iago : Good my lord, pardon me :
 Though I am bound to every act of duty,

I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts ? Why, say, they are vile and false.. ...

(ACT III, Sc. 3)

34. FRIENDSHIP.

If I avow friendship, I shall do all for it ,—

Des : (To Cassio) If I do avow a friendship, I'll perform it
To the last article my lord shall never rest ;
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience ;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift ;
I'll intermingle every thing he does
With Cassio's suit therefore be merry, Cassio ;
For, thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.

(ACT III, Sc. 3)

My friendly pleading, out of tune and unsuccessful ,—

Des Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio !
My advocacy is not now in tune ;
My lord is not my lord, nor should I know him
Where he in favour as in humour alter'd.
So help me every spirit sanctified,
As I have spoken for you all my best
And stood within the blank of his displeasure
For my free speech ! You must awhile be patient. (ACT III, Sc. 4)

35. HATRED and SPITE.

When hatred exists, mere suspicion will do for evidence of truth,—

Iago : I hate the Moor ;
And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office I know not if't be true ;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety.

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

36. HONESTY and LOVE, (a pretence).

A false pretence of it,—

(1) **Iago** . (To self) O wretched fool,
That livest to make thine honesty a vice !
O monstrous world ! Take note, take note, O world,
To be direct and honest is not safe.
(To Oth.) I thank you for this profit, and from hence
I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.

Oth : Nay, stay : thou shouldst be honest

Iago . I should be wise ; for honesty's a fool
And loses that it works for.

(ACT III, Sc. 3)

(2) **Oth** Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

Iago : I do not like the office .
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far ,
Prick'd to't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on.....

(ACT III Sc. 3)

- (3) **Mon.** And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own Second
With one of an ingraft infirmity
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor.

Iago: Not I, for this fair island
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of his evil

(ACT II, SC. 3)

37. HUSBAND and WIFE.

- (a) **A true wife's feelings, if kept in separation from her husband,—**

If I be left behind,—
A moth of peace,—and he go to the war,
The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. (So,) let me go with him.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

- (b) **A loving husband's joy on meeting his wife (after separation),—**

i. O my soul's joy ! If after every tempest,
Come such calms, may the winds blow
'Till they have waken'd death ! and let
The labouring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As Hell's from Heaven ! If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy ; for, I fear
My soul hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown fate.

(ACT II, SC. I)

.....
ii. O my sweet, I prattle out of fashion,
And I dote in mine own comforts.

(ACT II, SC. 1)

- (c) **Husband's sense of duty to the State, as against conjugal love,—**

And Heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant,
For she is with me. No, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and offic'd instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation !

(ACT I, SC. 3)

- (d) **Iago's complaint against his wife**

(to Cassio),—

Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

(ACT II, SC. 1)

- (e) **Husband's faults, if wives fall,—**

But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall : say, that they slack their duties
And pour our treasures into foreign laps ;
Or else break out in peevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us ; or say, they strike us,

Or scant our former having in despite ;
 Why, we have galls, and though we have some grace,
 Yet have we some revenge..... (ACT IV, SC. 3)

(f) **Wives have same feelings as Husbands,—**

i. Let husbands know
 Their wives have sense like them ; they see and smell,
 And have their palates both for sweet and sour,
 As husbands have. What is it that they do
 When they change us for others ? Is it sport ?
 I think it is · and doth affection breed it ?
 I think it doth. Is't frailty that thus eirs ?
 It is so too. (ACT IV, SC. 3)

ii. And have not we affections,
 Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have ?
 Then, let them use us well : else let them know,
 The ills we do, their ills instruct us so. (ACT IV, SC. 3.)

(g) **Jealous Husbands,—** [*See under Jealousy*]

(h) **Satiated Husbands,—**

Emi : 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man ·
 They are all but stomachs and we all but food ;
 They eat us hungerly, and when they are full
 They belch us (ACT III, SC. 4)

(i) **A cruel, but merciful Husband,—**

Not dead ? not yet quite dead ?
 I that am cruel, am yet merciful ;
 I would not have thee linger in thy pain :
 So, so. (*Smothering her still more*). (ACT V, SC. 2)

38. HYPOCRISY,—ITS PRETENCES & PLANS.

(1) **A hypocrite's dissimulation,—**

In following him, I follow but myself ;
 Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
 But seeming so, for my peculiar end.
 For, when my outward action doth demonstrate
 The native act and figure of my heart
 In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
 But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
 For daws to peck at ; I am not what I am. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) **Iago's pretence of love, in his service,—**

Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,
 Yet, for necessity of present life,
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(3) **A hypocrite's reasons for his abrupt departure,—**

Iago : (To Rod) Farewell ; for, I must leave you :

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
 To be produced—as, if I stay, I shall—
 Against the Moor for. I do know, the State,
 However this may gall him with some check,
 Cannot with safety cast him; for, he's embark'd
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
 Which even now stand in act, that, for their souls,
 Another of his fathom they have none
 To lead their business.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(4) A Hypocrite's pretence of being swayed by conscience and piety,—

Iago: Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
 Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
 To do no contrived murder. I lack iniquity
 Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
 I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

Oth: 'Tis better as it is.

Iago: Nay, but he prated
 And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
 Against your Honor,
 That, with the little godliness I have,
 I did full hard forbear him.

(ACT I, SC. 2.)

(5) A hypocrite's pretence of his solicitude for Othello,—

Iago: Be assured of this,
 That the the magnifico is much beloved,
 And hath in his effect a voice potential
 As double as the duke's: he will divorce you,
 Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
 The law, with all his might to enforce it on,
 Will give him cable.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(6) A Hypocrite's reflections,—

(a) On his dealings with fools,—

Iago: Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
 For, I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
 If I would time expend with such a snipe
 But for my sport and profit.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(b) On his dealings with credulous, confiding persons,—

Iago: He holds me well:
 The better shall my purpose work on him.

* * * *

After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
 That he (Cassio) is too familiar with his wife.
 He hath a person and a smooth dispose
 To be suspected; framed to make women false.

* * * *

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
 That thinks men honest but seem to be so;
 And will as tenderly be led by the nose
 As asses are.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

39. INDIGNATION, SURPRISE AND DNUNCIATION.

(2) A General's righteous indignation and surprise,—

Oth: Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil
 The gravity and stillness of your youth
 The world hath noted, and your name is great
 In mouths of wisest censure: what's the matter,
 That you unlace your reputation thus,
 And spend your rich opinion for the name
 Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it. (ACT II, SC. 3)

(3) An honest woman's righteous indignation at 'Purity slandered',—

Emil: Alas! Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,
 Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
 As true hearts cannot bear.....

.....

He call'd her whore: a beggar in his drink
 Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.

.....

Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
 Her father, and her country, and her friends,
 To be call'd whore? would it not make one weep? (ACT IV, SC. 2)

Denunciation of Slanderers:—

Emil I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
 Some busy and insinuating rogue,
 Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
 Have not devis'd this slander; I'll be hanged else.

Iago: Fie, there is no such man: it is impossible.

Des: If any such there be, Heaven pardon him!

Emil: A halter pardon him! and Hell gnaw his bones!
 Why should he call her whore? who keeps her company?
 What place? what time? what form? what likelihood?
 The Moor's abused by some most villanous knave,
 Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.
 O Heaven, that such companions thou 'ldst unfold,
 And put in every honest hand a whip
 To lash the rascals naked through the world
 Even from the east to the west! (ACT IV, SC. 2)

(4) Disillusionment and Surprise,—

Amil: My husband! [*to say that she was false!*]

Oth: Ay, 'twas he that told me first:
 An honest man he is, and hates the slime
 That sticks on filthy deeds.

Amil My husband!

Oth: What needs this iteration, woman? I say, thy husband.

Amil: O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love!
 My husband say, that she was false?

Oth : He, woman ;

I say thy husband : dost understand the word ?

My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago. (ACT V, SC. 2)

(5) Denunciation of the Culprits,—

Emil : If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day ! he lies to the heart :
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

Oth · Ha ! (*Roars and tries to go for her*)

Emil : Do thy worst .

This deed of thine is no more worthy Heaven
Than thou wast worthy herO gull ! O dolt !
As ignorant as dirt ! thou hast done a deed—
I care not for thy sword ; I'll make thee known
Though I lost twenty lives. Help ! help, ho ! help !
The Moor hath kill'd my mistress ! Murder ! murder !

(ACT V, SC. 2)

(6) Denunciation of the Lie, (*a damned, odious lie, a wicked lie*) :—

Emil . O, are you come, Iago ? you have done well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra : What is the matter ?

Emil : Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man ,
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false :
I know thou didst not, thou'rt not such a villain.
Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago : I told him what I thought, and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Emil . But did you ever tell him she was false ?

Iago : I did.

Emil . You told a lie, an odious, damned lie .
Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie !
She false with Cassio ! Did you say with Cassio ?

Iago : With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.

Emil . I will not charm my tongue ; I am bound to speak :
My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed,—

All : O heavens forbend !

Emil: And your reports have set the murder on.

Oth : Nay, stare not, masters : it is true, indeed. (ACT V(SC. 2)

(7) Denunciation of the Villainy,—

Emil : Villainy, villainy, villainy !
I think upon't : I think : I smell't . O villainy !
I thought so then : I'll kill myself for grief :
O villainy, villainy !

Iago · What, are you mad ? I charge you, get you home,

Emil Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak :
'Tis proper I obey him, but not now.
Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home,

Oth : O ! O ! O ! (*Falling on the bed.*)

Emil : Nay, lay thee down and roar ;
For, thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent
That e'er did lift up eye.

* * *

Oth . Tis pitiful ; but yet, Iago knows
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed ; Cassio confess'd it .
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her ; I saw it in his hand
It was a handkerchief, an antique token
My father gave my mother. (ACT V, SC 2)

(8) **Handkerchief**, (*The lie about it is now exposed and denounced*)—

Emil . O thou dull Moor ! that handkerchief thou speak'st of,
I found by fortune and did give my husband ;
For, often with a solemn earnestness,
More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,
He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago : Villainous whore !

Emil She gave it Cassio ? No ; alas ! I found it,
And I did give't my husband.

Iago . Filth, thou liest !

Emil : By Heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.
O murderous coxcomb ! what should such a fool
Do with so good a wife ?

Oth : Are there no stones in Heaven
But what serve for the thunder ? Precious villian !
(*He runs at Iago : Iago, from behind, stabs Emilia, and exits.*)
(ACT V, SC. 2)

40. INNOCENCE and SIMPLICITY.

Desdemona's simple but wrong causation of Othello's misery and tears—

Oth : O Desdemona ! Away ! away ! away ! (*weeping*)

Des : Alas the heavy day ! Why do you weep ?
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord ?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me : if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

Oth : Had it pleased Heaven to try me with affliction ;.....
See Lament, &c. p. 45 (ACT IV, SC. 2)

41. INSINUATIONS.

(1) **Iago's artful insinuations, on seeing Cassio leave Desdemona,—**

Iago : Ha ! I like not that.

Oth : What dost thou say ?

Iago : Nothing, my lord : or if—I know not what.

Oth : Was not that Cassio parted from my wife ?

Iago : Cassio, my lord ! No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.

Oth : I do believe 'twas he.....

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(2) Further Insinuations, exciting Othello's Suspicion,—

Iago . My noble lord,—

Oth . What dost thou say, Iago ?

Iago . Did Michael Cassio..... (*Vide pages 189, 191, 192, 193 of text*)

(3) Foul insinuations, marked by professions of love and duty,—

Iago I am glad of it ; for, now I shall have reason
To show the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit . therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife : observe her well with Cassio ;
Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure .
I would not have your free and noble nature
Out of self-bounty be abused ; look to't :
I know our country—disposition well ;
In Venice, they do let Heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands ; their best conscience
Is not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown.

Oth . Dost thou say so ?

Iago She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
She loved them most.

Oth : And so she did.

Iago : Why, go to, then ;
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seal her father's eyes up close as oak—
He thought 'twas witchcraft,—but I am much to blame ;
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.

Oth : I am bound to thee for ever.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

4) The effect of such Insinuations,—

Iago I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth : Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago . In faith, I fear, it has.

I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love ; but I do see you're moved :
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion

ACT III, SC. 3}

42. JEALOUSY.

(1) Jealousy, a green-eyed Monster,—

Iago : O, beware, my lord, of jealousy ;
 It is the green-eyed monster, which doth mock
 The meat it feeds on . that cuckold lives in bliss
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
 But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
 Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves !

* * * *

Oth : Why, why is this !
 Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,
 To follow still the changes of the moon
 With fresh suspicions ? No ; to be once in doubt
 Is once to be resolved : exchange me for a goat,
 When I shall turn the business of my soul
 To such exsufflicate and blown surmises,
 Matching thy inference.

(ACT III, SC 3)

2) No cause for jealousy in her accomplishments,—

Oth : 'Tis not to make me jealous
 To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
 Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well ;
 Where virtue is, these are more virtuous :
 Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
 The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt ;
 For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago ;
 I'll see before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove ;
 And on the proof, there is no more but this,
 Away at once with love or jealousy !

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(3) Iago's artful ways and suggestions to excite Othello's jealousy,—

(a) Iago : (*Going*) My lord, I take my leave.....

(*Returning*) My lord, I would I might entreat your Honour
 To scan this thing no further ; leave it to time :
 Though it be fit that Cassio have his place,
 For sure he fills it up with great ability,
 Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
 You shall by that perceive him and his means :
 Note if your lady strain his entertainment
 With any strong or vehement importunity ;
 Much will be seen in that. In the meantime,
 Let me be thought too busy in my fears—
 As worthy cause I have to fear I am—
 And hold her free, I do beseech your Honour.

Oth : Fear not my government.

Iago : I once more take my leave. (*Exit.*)

(ACT III, SC. 3)

4) Jealousy, once excited, is easily fed by trifles,—

Iago: Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(5) Dangerous conceits are inflammable material,—

(Jealousy is fed by suspicions which are like poisons).

Iago: The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons:
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur. I did say so:
Look, where he comes! (ACT III, SC. 3)

(6) The effect of jealousy in banishing sleep,—

Iago. *(Chuckling)* Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owedst yesterday. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(7) The pangs and tortures of jealousy,—

Oth. Ha! ha! false to me?

Iago Why, how now, general! no more of that.

Oth. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack;
I swear 'tis better to be much abused
Than but to know't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord!

Oth.: What sense had I of her stol'n hours of lust?
I saw't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me.
I slept the next night well, was free and merry;
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips;
He that is robbed, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know it, and he is not robbed at all.

Iago: I am sorry to hear this.

Oth.: I had been happy, if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known. O, now, for ever,
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!.....(Vide p. 32)

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(8.) Jealous Othello, on Desdemona's hand,—

Oth.: Give me your hand: this hand is moist, my lady.

Des.: It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

Oth.: This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For, here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

Des : You may, indeed, say so ;
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth : A liberal hand . the hearts of old gave hands ;
But our newheraldry is hands, not hearts.

Des : I cannot speak of this.

(ACT III, SC. 4)

(9.) **Jealousy,—a monster begot of itself,—**

Des : Alas the day ! I never gave him cause !

Emil : But jealous souls will not be answer'd so ;
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous, for they are jealous : 'Tis a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des . Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind ! (ACT III, SC. 4)

(10.) **Jealousy (sexual),—** (*In remembrance of a wrong*)

Oth : (*Reminded of the handkerchief*)
O, it comes o'er my memory
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all.

Oth : (*Advancing*) How shall I murder him, Iago ?

Iago . Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice ?

Oth . O ! Iago !

Iago And did you see the handkerchief ?

Oth Was that mine ?

Iago . Yours, by this hand . and to see how he prizes the foolish woman
your wife ! She gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(11) **Others' comment, when jealous Othello abuses and strikes Desdemona,—**

(1) **Lod .** My lord, this would not be believed in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw't . 'tis very much ;
Make her amends; she weeps.

Oth [*To Des.*] O devil, devil !

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.
Out of my sight ! Proceed you in your tears.
Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted passion !—
I am commanded home. Get you away ;
I'll send for you anon. Sir, I obey the mandate,
And will return to Venice. Hence, avaunt ! (*Exit Desdemona.*)

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(2) **Lod :** Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in-all sufficient ? This the nature
Whom passion could not shake ? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce ?

Iago : He is much changed.

Oth : Are his wits safe ? Is he not light of brain ?
 Iago : He's that he is : I may not breathe my censure
 What he might be : if what he might he is not,
 I would to Heaven he were !
 Lod : What, strike his wife !
 Iago : Faith, that was not so well ; yet would, I knew
 That stroke would prove the worst !
 Lod : Is it his use ?
 Or did the letters work upon his blood,
 And new create this fault ?
 Iago : Alas, Alas !
 It is not honesty in me to speak
 What I have seen and known. You shall observe him,
 And his own courses will denote him, so
 That I may save my speech : do but go after,
 And mark how he continues.
 Lod : I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(12) Jealous Othello, questioning Emilia.

Oth : You have seen nothing, then ?
 Emil : Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.
 Oth : Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together,
 Emil : But then I saw no harm, and then I heard
 Each syllable that breath made up between them.
 Oth : What, did they never whisper ?
 Emil : Never my lord.
 Oth : Nor send you out o' the way ?
 Emil : Never.
 Oth : To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing ?
 Emil : Never, my lord.
 Oth : That's strange.
 Emil : I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest.....

(See under Vindication)

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(13) A Jealous husband's strange behaviour,—abusing, weeping, and lamenting,—

Oth : Pray, chuck, come hither.
 Des : What is your pleasure ?
 Oth : Let me see your eyes
 Look in my face.
 Des : What horrible fancy's this ?
 Oth : (To Emilia) Some of your function, mistress,
 Leave procreants alone and shut the door ;
 Cough, or cry hem, if any body come :
 Your mystery, your mystery : nay, dispatch. (*Exit Emilia*)
 Des : Upon my knees, what does your speech import ?
 I understand a fury in your words,
 But not the words,

Oth : What art thou ?

Des : My wife, my lord ; your true and loyal wife.

Oth : Come, swear it, damn thyself ;

Best, being like one of Heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee : therefore, be double-damn'd ;
Swear thou art honest.

Des : Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth : Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

Des : To whom, my lord ? with whom ? how am I false ?

Oth : O Desdemona ! Away ! away ! (*Weeps*)

Des : Alas the heavy day ! Why do you weep ?
Am I the motive of these tears,..... (*Vide page 39*) (ACT IV, SC. 2)

43. JOY (on meeting Desdemona)

Oth : O my fair warrior !.....

It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy !
If after every tempest... .. (*Vide page 31*)

Des : The Heavens forbid

But that our loves and comforts should increase,
Even as our days do grow !

Oth : Amen to that, sweet powers !

I cannot speak enough of this content ;
It stops me here ; it is too much of joy :
And this, and this, the greatest discords be (*Kissing her*)
That e'er our hearts shall make ! (ACT II, SC. 1)

*

*

*

O my sweet, I partle out of fashion ;
And, I dote in mine own comforts.

(ACT II, SC. I)

44. LAMENT and PROTEST (full of tender emotion).

Othello's pathetic wail & lament,—

Had it pleas'd heaven
To try me with affliction ; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head ;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips ;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes ;
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience : but, alas, to make me
A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow and moving finger at !—
Yet, could I bear that too ; well, very well :
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live, or bear no life,
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up,—to be discarded thence !
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in !..... (ACT IV, SC. 2)

Desdemona's innocent, touching appeal, and painful lament,—

Des : O good Iago,
 What shall I do to win my lord again?
 Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of Heaven,
 I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel: (*Weeping*
 If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love
 Either in discourse of thought or actual deed;
 Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
 Delighted them in any other form;
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will,—though he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,
 Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
 And his unkindness may defeat my life,
 But never taint my love. I cannot say 'whore':
 It doth abhor me now I speak the word;
 To do the act that might the addition earn,
 Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago : I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour:
 The business of the State does him offence,
 And he does chide with you. * * *
 Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well. (ACT IV, Sc. 2)

45. LOSS, blissful ignorance of—

Loss is no loss, if not known,—

Oth : What sense had I of her stol'n hours of lust?
 I saw't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:
 I slept the next night well, was free and merry;
 I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
 He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n,
 Let him not know't and he's not robbed at all. (ACT III, Sc. 3)

46. LOVE.

(1) **Othello's love,—the basis of his marriage with Desdemona,—**

Oth : For, know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my unhoused free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine
 For the sea's worth. (ACT I, Sc. 2)

(2) **Othello is questioned as to how he won Desdemona's love,—**

First Sen : But, Othello, speak:
 Did you, by indirect and forced courses,
 Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
 Or, came it by request, and such fair question
 As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth : I do beseech you,
 Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
 And let her speak of me before her father:

If you did find me foul in her report,
 Then trust the office I do hold of you,
 Not only take away, but let your sentence
 Even fall upon my life.

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(3) Othello's account of his Love-affair,—

Oth: Most potent, grave, and reverend Signiors,... (Vide p. 23, text)

.....

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

Desdemona's Love for Othello,—

Des: That I did love the Moor to live with him,
 My downright violence and storm of fortunes
 May trumpet to the world : my heart's subdued
 Even to the very quality of my lord :
 I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
 And to his honours and his valiant parts
 Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate..... ..

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(5) Iago's view of Love,—

Love is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will.
 * * * It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her
 love to the Moor —(vide p. 38, nine lines of the text, as far as—
 'she must have change, she must')

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

47. LOVE-TOKEN,

(1.) Ever so dear and sacred to the beloved,—

Emil: I am glad I have found this napkin :
 This was her first remembrance from the Moor :
 My wayward husband hath a hundred times
 Woo'd me to steal it ; but she so loves the token,—
 For, he conjured her she should ever keep it,—
 That she reserves it evermore about her
 To kiss and talk to.

(ACT III, Sc. 3)

(2) Snatched, to be used for a wicked purpose,—

Emil: I'll have the work ta'en out,
 And give't Iago : what he will do with it
 Heaven knows, not I ;
 I nothing but to please his fantasy.....

Iago: A good wench ; give it me.

Emil: What will you do with't, that you have been so earnest
 To have me filch it ?

Iago: (Snatching it) Why, what's that to you ?

Emil: If't be not for some purpose of import,
 Give't me again : poor lady, she'll run mad
 When she shall lack it.

Iago: Be not acknown on't ; I have use for it
 Go, leave me.

(ACT III, Sc. 3)

(3) Othello ascribes superstitious, magical properties to it,—

Oth : That handkerchief
 Did an Egyptian to my mother give ;
 She was a charmer, and could almost read
 The thoughts of people ; she told her, while she kept it
 'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father
 Entirely to her love ; but if she lost it
 Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
 Should hold her loathed and his spirit should hunt
 After new fancies ; she, dying, gave it me,
 And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
 To give it her. I did so : and take heed on't ;
 Make it a darling like your precious eye ;
 To lose't or give't away were such perdition
 As nothing else could match.

Des : Is't possible ?

Oth ; 'Tis true there's magic in the web of it :
 A sibyl, that had number'd in the world
 The sun to course two hundred compasses,
 In her prophetic fury sew'd the work,
 The worms were hallow'd that did breed the silk,
 And it was dyed in mummy which the skilful
 Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.

* * * Therefore, look to't well.

(ACT III, SC. 4)

48 MARRIAGE.

- (1) Love, the true basis of marriage,— [Vide p. 47, 1]]
 (2) Jealousy-ridden Husband's view of Marriage,—

Oth . O curse of marriage,
 That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
 And not their appetites ! I had rather be a toad,
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love
 For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones ;
 Prerogativ'd are they less than the base ;
 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(3) A villain's view of inter-racial marriages,—

Oth : I do not think but Desdemona's honest.
 Iago : Long live she so ! and long live you to think so !
 Oth : And yet, how nature erring from itself—
 Iago . Ay, there's the point : as--to be bold with you—
 Not to affect many proposed matches
 Of her own clime, complexion and degree,
 Whereto we see in all things Nature tends—
 Foh ! one may smell in such a will most rank,
 Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
 But pardon me : I do not in position

Distinctly speak of her ; tho' I may fear,
 Her will coming to her better judgment,
 May fall to catch you with her country forms,
 And apply repent.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(4) **An Annotator's view of inter-racial marriages,—**

For, if such actions may have passage free,
 Bond slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

49. MERITS and QUALIFICATIONS.(1) **Othello, on his services, royal birth, merits, &c,—**

Oth : My services which I have done the Signior,
 Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know—
 Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
 I shall promulgate—I fetch my life and being
 From men of royal siege, and my demerits
 May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
 As this that I have reach'd.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(2) **On his parts, title and clear conscience,—**

Iago : Those are the raised father and his friends,
 You were best go in.

Oth : Not I ; I must be found :
 My parts, my title and my perfect soul,
 Shall manifest me rightly.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(3) **On his self-control,—**

Oth : Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them ;
 Good Signior, you shall more command with years
 Than with your weapons.

(ACT I, SC. 2)

(4) **On soldierly qualifications and experiences,—**

Oth : Rude am I in my speech,
 And little blest with the soft phrase of peace :
 For, since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
 Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used
 Their dearest action in the tented field ;
 And little of this great world can I speak,
 More than pertains to feats of broil and battle :
 And therefore little shall I grace my cause
 In speaking for myself..

(ACT I, SC. 3)

50. MURDER.(a) **Of Roderigo :**

Emil : Cassio, my lord, hath killed a young Venetian, called Roderigo.

Oth : Roderigo killed ! and Cassio killed ?

Emil : No, Cassio is not killed.

Oth : Not Cassio killed ? Then, murder's out of tune,
 And sweet revenge grows harsh.

(ACT V, SC. 2)

(b) Of Desdemona :

Des : O, falsely, falsely murdered !

Emil : Alas, what cry is that ?
 Alas, alas, that was my lady's voice.
 Help ! help, ho ! help ! O lady, speak again !
 Sweet Desdemona ! O sweet mistress, speak !

Des : A guiltless death I die.

Emil : O, who hath done this deed ?

Des : Nobody ; I myself Farewell:
 Commend me to my kind lord . O, farewell ! (*Dies.*)

Oth : Why, how should she be murder'd ?

Emil : Alas, who knows ?

Oth : You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Emil : She said so (but) I must needs report the truth. (ACT V, sc. 2)

51. PATIENCE.

(1) Desdemona's advice to Cassio,—

Des : You must awhile be patient .
 What I can do, I will ; and more I will
 Than for myself I dare let that suffice you (ACT III, Sc. 2)

(2) Othello, excited by jealousy, loses his patience,—

Oth : Turn thy complexion there,
 Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,
 Ay, there, look grim as Hell ! (ACT IV, Sc. 2)

52. PLEADING, (vehement, almost childishly pressing),

Desdemona's eager but tactless pleading for Cassio,—

Des : How now, my lord !
 I have been talking with a suitor here,
 A man that languishes in your displeasure.
Oth : Who is't you mean ?
Des : Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,
 If I have any grace or power to move you,
 His present reconciliation take ;
 For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
 That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
 I have no judgment in an honest face ;
 I prithee, call him back.
Oth : Went he hence now ?
Des : Ay, sooth ; so humbled,
 That he hath left part of his grief with me,
 To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.
Oth : Not now, sweet Desdemona ; some other time.
Des : But shall't be shortly ?.....To morrow night ; or Tuesday morn ;
 On Tuesday noon, or night ; on Wednesday morn ;

~~Prithee, name the time ; but let it not
Exceed these days : in faith, he's penitent.
And let his trespass, in our common reason,—
Say that, they say, the wars must make examples
Out of their best,—is not almost a fault
To incur a private check.~~

When shall he come ?

Tell me, Othello : I wonder in my soul,
What you would ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on. What ! Michael Cassio,
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time
When I have spoke of you dispaingly,
Hath ta'en your part ; to have so much to do
To bring him in ! Trust me, I could do much.—

Oth Prithee, no more : let him come when he will ;
I will deny thee nothing. (ACT III, SC. 3)

53. PRAISE (by a courtier).

A courtier's sincere but rhapsodical praise of a fair maiden,—

(a) A maid that paragon's description and wild fame,
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation,
Does tire the ingener. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(b) Tempests themselves, high seas and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks and congregated sands,—
Traitors, ensteeped to clog the guiltless keel—
As having sense of beauty, do omit their mortal nature,
Letting go safely by the divine Desdemona. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(c) O, behold, the riches of the ship is come on shore !
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.
Hail to thee, lady ! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round ! (ACT II, SC. 1)

53. (a). PRAYERS, HOPES and GOOD WISHES.

(1) Oth : This (the story of my life) to hear,
Would Desdemona seriously incline :
But still the house-affairs would draw her thence :
Which even as she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse : which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intently : I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd..... (ACT I, SC. 3)

- (2) **Cas** : Thanks, you, the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor ! O, let the Heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.
- Mon** : Is he well shipp'd ?
- Cas** : His bark is stoutly timber'd and his pilot
Of very expert and approved allowance ;
Therefore, my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure. (ACT II, SC. 1)
- (3) **Cas** : Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort. (ACT II, SC. 1)
- (4) **Oth** : Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?
- Des** : Ay, my lord.
- Oth** : If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.
- Des** : Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that ?
- Oth** : Well, do it, and be brief ; I will walk by :
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;
No ; Heaven forbid ! I would not kill thy soul.
- Des** : Talk you of killing ?
- Oth** : Ay, I do
- Des** : Then Heaven have mercy on me ! (ACT V, SC. 2)

54. PREMONITION or PRESENTIMENT.

- (1) **Nature's premonition,—**
Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion
Without some instruction. (ACT IV, SC. 1)
- (2) **A strange presentiment of her death,—**
- Des** : He says he will return incontinent :
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.
- Emil** : Dismiss me !
- Des** : It was his bidding ; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu ;
We must not now displease him.
- Emil** : I would, you had never seen him :
- Des** : So would not I ; my love doth so approve him
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns,—
Prithee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.
- Emil** : I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.
- Des** : All's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds !
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Emil : Come, come, you talk.

Des : My mother had a maid call'd Barbara :
 She was in love ; and he she loved, proved mad
 And did forsake her · she had a song of 'willow' ;
 An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
 And she died singing it: that song to-night
 Will not go from my mind.

(ACT IV, SC. 3)

55. PROBABILITIES.

(a) Do the probabilities really point to the use of drugs or charms ?—

Bra : She is abused, stol'n from me and corrupted
 By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks ;
 For nature so preposterously to err,
 Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
 Sans witchcraft could not (be).

.....

And she,—inspite of nature,
 Of years, of country, credit, everything—
 To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on !
 It is a judgment maim'd and most imperfect,
 That will confess perfection so could err
 Against all rules of nature ; and must be driven
 To find out practices of cunning hell,
 Why this should be.

I therefore vouch again
 That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
 Or with some dram conjured to this effect,
 He wrought upon her.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

(b) Mere probabilities are no proof,—

Duke : To vouch this, is no proof,
 Without more certain and more overt test
 Than these thin habits and poor likelihoods
 Of modern seeming do prefer against him.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

56. PROOF.

(1) Proof, (ocular and convincing),—

Oth : Villain, be sure, thou prove my love a whore :
 Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

* * * * *

Make me to see't ; or, at the least, so prove it
 That the probation bear no hinge nor loop
 To hang a doubt on ; or woe upon thy life !

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(2) Proof,—satisfying proof, (demanded by vacillating Othello),—

Oth : By the world,
 I think my wife be honest, and think she is not ;
 I think that thou art just, and think thou art not :
 I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh
 As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black

As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it. Would, I were satisfied !

Iago : I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion :
I do repent me that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied ?

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(3) Proof, but what is a satisfying proof ?—

Iago : But how ? how satisfied, my lord ?
Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on ?
Behold her topp'd ?

Oth : Death and damnation ! O !

Iago : It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect ; damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster
More than their own ! What then ? how then ?
What shall I say ? Where's satisfaction ?
It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have't.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(4) Proof, or circumstantial evidence, concocted by the villain,—

Oth : Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

Iago . I do not like the office :
But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,
Prick'd to't by foolish honesty and love,
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately,
And being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep
There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs :
One of this kind is Cassio .
In sleep, I heard him say, ' Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves ' :
And then, Sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,
Cry ' O sweet creature ! ' and then kiss me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips then, laid his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh'd and kiss'd ; and then.
Cried ' Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor ! '

Oth : O monstrous ! monstrous !

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(5) Proof ; though only a dream, it thickens other proofs,—

Iago : Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth : But this denoted a foregone conclusion :
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago And this may help to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth : I'll tear her all to pieces.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(6) **Proof, concocted from the handkerchief, now satisfies Othello.**—

Iago : Nay, but be wise, yet we see nothing done ;
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this ;
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand ?

Oth I gave her such a one , 'twas my first gift.

Iago I know not that ; but such a handkerchief—
I am sure it was your wife's—did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

Oth : If it be that,—

Iago : If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

Oth O, that the slave had forty thousand lives !
One is too poor, too weak, for my revenge
Now do I see ' tis true. Look here, Iago ;
All my fond love thus do I blow to Heaven :
'Tis gone.....

(ACT. III, SC. 3)

57. PROSTITUTION.

Prostitutes, their pitiable lives,—

Iago : (To self) Now will I question Cassio, of Bianca,—
A housewife that by selling her desires
Buys herself bread and clothes it is a creature
That dotes on Cassio ; as 'tis the strumpet's plague
To beguile many and be beguiled by one.

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

58. PROVOCATION.

1) Iago : What an eye she has ! methinks, it sounds a parley to provocation.

Cas . An inviting eye, and yet, methinks, right modest.

Iago : And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love ?

Cas : She is indeed perfection.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(2) Iago , But men are men ; the best sometimes forget .

Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet surely, Cassio, I believe, received
From him that fled, some strange indignity
Which patience could not pass.

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(3) Iago : (To Rod.) But, sir, be you ruled by me : I have brought you
from Venice. Watch you to-night ; for the command, I'll lay't
upon you . Cassio knows you not : I'll not be far from you : do
you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud
or tainting his discipline, or from what other course you please,
which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod : Well.

Iago : Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike as
you : provoke him, that he may ; for, even out of that will I cause

these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them, and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod : I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago : I warrant thee.

(ACT II, SC. 1)

- (4) **Iago .** He (Othello) goes into Mauritania, and takes away with him the fair Desdemona ; unless his alode be lingered here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

Rod . How do you mean, removing of him ?

Iago : Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place, by knocking out his brains.

Rod : And that you would have *me* to do ?

Iago : Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him : he knows not yet of his honourable fortune. If you will watch his going thence, which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one, you may take him at your pleasure . I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at it, but go along with me ; I will show you such a necessity in his death that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper time, and the night grows to waste : about it.

Rod : I will hear further reason for this.

Iago : And you shall be satisfied.

(ACT IV, SC. 2)

59. PUBLIC OPINION.

The Duke, swayed by public opinion, appoints Othello,—

Duke : And though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet Opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you : you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

60. PUNISHMENT, (according to law, justice or honor)

- (1) **According to the 'book of Law,'—**

Duke : Whoe'er he be that, in this foul proceeding,
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
After your own sense, yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

(ACT I, SC. 3)

- (2) **Punishment, only on conclusive proof, but not on mere assertions and poor probabilities,—**

Duke : To vouch this, is no proof, (*Vide Probabilities*)

(3) Punishment in policy,—

(a) **Iago :** ' You are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice ; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion. (ACT II, SC. 3)

(b) **Cas** (To Des.) That policy may either last so long,
Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
That, I being absent and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(c) **Cas :** (To Des.) I would not be delay'd.
If my offence be of such mortal kind,
That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purposed merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
Then to know so must be my benefit ;
Then shall I clothe me in a forced content
And shut myself up in some other course
To fortune's alms. (ACT III, SC. 4)

(4) Threat of punishment, to a deceitful, accusing villain,—

Oth : Villain, be sure, thou prove my love a whore ;
Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;
Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better born a dog
Than answer my waked wrath !
* * *
If thou dost slander her and torture me,
Never pray more ; abandon all remorse ;
On horror's head horrors accumulate ;
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed ;
For, nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(5) Punishment of an unfaithful wife,—

Oth : Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night ;
For she shall not live : No, my heart is turned to stone.
(ACT IV, SC. 1)

Oth : Yet, she must die, else she'll betray more men.
* * *
(To Des.) If you bethink yourself of any crime,
Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight ... I will walk by :
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit ;
No ; Heaven forbid ! I would not kill thy soul.
(ACT V, SC. 2)

(6) Punishment of the abhorred villain,—

Lod :— For this slave,
If there be any cunning cruelty

That can torment him much and hold him long,
It shall be his.

Lod : (*To Iago*) O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea !
Look on the tragic loading of this bed,
This is thy work : the object poisons sight ;
Let it be hid... (*To Cas.*) To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain,
The time, the place, the torture : O, enforce it !

(ACT V, Sc. 2)

61. RECONCILIATION, (the spirit of) —

(1) The Duke tries to reconcile Brabantio to the marriage,—

Duke : I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio, take up this mangled matter at the best :
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.....
Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(2) Be resigned or reconciled to incurable griefs,—

Duke : When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief ;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(3) But Brabantio is obdurate and replies,—

(*These are equivocal or contradictory maxims.*)

Bra . So, let the Turk, of Cyprus us beguile ;
We lose it not so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears ;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal :
But words are words ; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(4) The Duke says 'Good-night' and commends Othello's Character,—

Good night to every one,
(*To Brab.*) And, noble Signior, if virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black

(ACT I, Sc. 3)

(5) Desdemona tries to reconcile Othello to Cassio,—

Des : Good my lord,
If I have any grace or power to move you,

His present reconciliation take ;
 For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
 That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
 I have no judgment in an honest face ;
 I prithee, call him back.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

62. REMORSE, REPENTANCE, and Suicide

Othello's agonised Remorse,—

Oth : Now, how dost thou look now ? O ill-starr'd wench !
 Pale as thy smock ! when we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl !
 Even like thy chastity.

O cursed slave ! Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this Heavenly sight !
 Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire !
 O Desdemona ! Desdemona ! dead !
 Oh ! Oh ! Oh !

(ACT V, SC. 2)

Othello's Last Words,—

Oth :—Soft you ; a word or two before you go.
 I have done the State some service, and they know't.
 No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
 When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
 Speak of me as I am · nothing extenuate,
 Nor set down aught in malice · then must you speak
 Of one that loved not wisely but too well ;
 Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
 Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one whose hand,
 Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
 Richer than all his tribe ; of one whose subdued eyes,
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,
 Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
 Their medicinal gum. Set you down this :
 And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
 Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
 Beat a Venetian and traduced the State,
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog
 And smote him, thus.

[Stabs himself.]

I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee : no way but this,
 Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

[Falls on the bed, and dies.]

(ACT V, SC. 2)

63. REPUTATION, or GOOD NAME and FAME.

Reputation, as viewed by a gentleman and a villain,—

- (a) **Cas.** Reputation, reputation, reputation ! O, I have lost my reputation !
 I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is
 bestial. My reputation, Iago, my reputation !
- (b) **Iago :** As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily
 wound ; there is more sense in that than in reputation. Reputation

is an idle and most false imposition, oft got without merit and lost without deserving : you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. (ACT. II, SC. 2)

Good name or reputation,—

Iago : Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls :
Who steals my purse steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing ;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands ;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed. (ACT III, SC. 3)

64. REPUTATION and HONOR. (A cynic on—)

Iago : Her honour is an essence that's not seen ;
They have it very oft that have it not : (ACT IV, SC. 1)

65. REVENGE.

(1) **Revenge (planned through hatred and spite), —**

Iago : The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature ;
And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona
Almost dear husband.
Now, I do love her too,
Not out of absolute lust, though peradventure
I stand accountant for as great a sin,
But partly led to diet my revenge,
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat : the thought whereof
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards ;
And nothing can or shall content my soul
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife ;
Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgment cannot cure.
Which thing to do,
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb ;
For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too ;
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
For making him egregiously an ass,
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(2) **Revenge,—Bitter, Bloody, Wide and Grim ,**

Oth : O, that the slave had forty thousand lives !
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago ;
All my fond love thus do I blow to Heaven :

'Tis gone.

Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell !
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous hate ! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 'tis of aspics' tongues !

Iago : Yet be content.

Oth : O, blood, blood, blood !

Iago : Patience, I say ; your mind perhaps may change.

Oth : Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont ;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge swallow them up

(ACT III, SC. 3)

(3) **Revenge, sworn against Cassio and Desdemona,—**

Oth : Now, by yond marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words. (Kneels)

Iago : (*Also Kneeling, swears help.*)
Witness, you ever-burning lights above,
You elements that clip us round about,
Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wrong'd Othello's service ! Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever. (They rise)

Oth : I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't :
Within thee three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio's not alive.

Iago : My friend is dead ; 'tis done at your request :
But let her live.

Oth : Damn her, lewd minx ! O, damn her !
Come, go with me apart ; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago : I am your own for ever. (ACT III, SC. 3)

(4) **Revenge is sweet,—**

I would have him nine years a-killing.

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(5) **Heart, hardened with Revenge,—**

My heart is turned to stone ; I strike it, and it hurts my hand.

(ACT IV, SC. 1)

(6) **Othello is filled with vengeance mixed with pity and admiration.**

Oth : I would have him nine years a-killng. A fine woman ! a fair woman ! a sweet woman !

Iago : Nay, you must forget that.

Oth : Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned to night; for she shall not live . no my heart is turned to stone ; I strike it and it hurts my hand. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature ! she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

Iago : Nay, that's not your way.

Oth : Hang her ! I do but say what she is : so delicate with her needle: an admirable musician O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear . of so high and plenteous wit and invention :—

Iago : She's the worse for all this.

Oth . A thousand thousand times . and then, of so gentle a condition!..... But yet the pity of it, Iago ! O, Iago the pity of it, Iago

Iago : If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Oth : I will chop her into messes . cuckold me !

(ACT IV, Sc. 1)

66. SELF-CONCEIT (immoderate).

Iago, on his own worth,—

And, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place .
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war ,
And, in conclusion, nonsuits my mediators.

(ACT I, Sc. 1)

67. SELF-INTEREST.

Private or personal interest, over-riding public interest,—

Duke : Welcome, gentle signior ;

We lacked your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra : So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me :

Neither my place nor aught I heard of business
Hath raised me from my bed, nor doth the general care
Take hold on me ; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'er-bearing nature
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself .

(ACT I, SC. 3)

68 SERVICE and SERVANTS.(1) **Job or promotion goes by influence, not by merit or seniority,**

Iago : Why, there's no remedy ; 'tis the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second

Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself
Whether I, in any just term, am affined
To love the Moor.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) Self-interest is the only motive of some servants,

Iago : O, sir, content you ;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him ;
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(3) Honest Servants, Vs. Designing Hypocrites,—

You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave
That doting on his own obsequious bondage
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For nought but provender, and when he's old, cashier'd :
Whip me such honest knaves.

Others there are who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And throwing but shows of service on their lords
Do well thrive by them, and when they have lined their coats
Do themselves homage these fellows have some soul,
And such a one do I profess myself.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(4) Service, not for love or duty, but from pure selfishness,—

Iago : In following him, I follow but myself ;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end

(ACT I, SC. 1)

(5) A villain's plausible plea of service,—

Iago : 'Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve God, if the
devil bid you. Because we come to do you service and you think
we are ruffians.

(ACT I, SC. 1)

69 SILENCE

Silence unwise, when a wrong is done or designed,—

Oth : Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd and makest his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

(ACT III, SC. 3)

70. SOLDIER (a true—)

(1) Requesting Iago to tell the Truth as an honest soldier,—

Mon : If partially affined or leagued in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago : Touch me not so near.....

(ACT II, SC. 3)

(2) Othello, as a soldier,—

Mon : Pray Heavens he be (safe),
For I have served him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier.

(ACT II, SC. 1)

(3) *Othello, on a soldier's life:—*

Oth : The tyrant custom, most grave Senators,
 Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
 My thrice-driven bed of down : I do agnize
 A natural and prompt alacrity
 I find in hardness ;..... (ACT. I, SC. 3)

(4) *Cassio to Desdemona, on Iago's cynical temper,—*

He speaks home, madam : you may relish him more
 in the soldier than in the scholar. (ACT II, SC. 1)

(5) *Othello on a soldier's life to Desdemona,—*

Come, Desdemona : 'tis the soldier's life
 To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife. (ACT II, SC. 3)

71. SORROWS.

(1) *Personal sorrows,—*

My particular grief
 Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature
 That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
 And it is still itself. (ACT I, SC. 3)

(2) *Reconciliation to our sorrows,—*

- (a) Take up this mangled matter at the best
 Men do their broken weapons rather use
 Than their bare hands. (ACT I, SC. 3)
- (b) When remedies are past the griefs are ended...(*Vide Reconciliation.*)

72. STORM. (a sea-port Scene)

Mon : What from the cape can you discern at sea ?

First Gent : Nothing at all : it is a high-wrought flood ;
 I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
 Descry a sail.

Mon : Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land ;
 A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements :
 If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
 What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
 Can hold the mortise ? What shall we hear of this ?

Sec. Gent : A segregation of the Turkish fleet :
 For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
 The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds ;
 The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous mane,
 Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
 And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole :
 I never did like molestation view
 On the enchafed flood.

Mon : If that the Turkish fleet
 Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd ;
 It is impossible to bear it out. (ACT II, SC. 1)

73. STRATEGICAL TACTICS.

A trick of war, seen through, (by making Rhodes, and not Cyprus, the ostensible object of the attack).

First Sen : This cannot be,
 By no assay of reason · 'tis a pageant
 To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
 The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,
 And let ourselves again but understand
 That as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,...
 We must not think the Turk is so unskilful
 To leave that latest which concerns him first,
 Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
 To wake and wage a danger profitless. (ACT I, SC. 3)

74. SUICIDE. .

(1) Of Othello, when disillusioned,—

Iago : I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee : no way but this,
(Falling upon Desdemona)
 Killing myself, to die upon a kiss. *(Dies.)* (ACT V, SC. 2)

(2) As thought of by Roderigo,—

Rod : I will incontinently drown myself.....It is silliness to live when
 to live is torment ; and then have we a prescription to die when
 death is our physician. (ACT I, SC. 3)

75. SUSPENSE, (an undesirable state of mind).

Cassio, on his ' former suit ' and rack of suspense ,—

Madam, my former suit : I do beseech you
 That by your virtuous means I may again
 Exist, and be a member of his love
 Whom I with all the office of my heart
 Entirely honour . I would not be delay'd....*(Vide Punishment)*
 (ACT III, SC. 4)

76. TEARS (crocodile).

Othello, on Desdemona's tears ,—

Oh devil, devil !
 If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
 Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.
 Out of my sight ! (ACT IV, SC. 1)

77. TIME, (as computed by a lover).

How a lover measures time, or feels the lapse of it,—

Cas : How is it with you, my most fair Bianca ?
 I'faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.
Bian : And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
 What, keep a week away ? seven days and nights ?
 Eight score eight hours ? and lovers' absent hours,

More tedious than the dial eight score times ?
O weary reckoning !

Cas : Pardon me, Bianca,
I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd ;
But I shall in a more continue time
Strike off this score of absence. (ACT III, SC. 4)

78. VILLAINY S DARK DESIGNS AND DEEDS.

(1) Mere suspicions will do for certainties,—

I know not if't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. (ACT I, SC. 3)

(2) With little Means,—

With as little a web as this, will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio.
(ACT II, SC. 1)

(3) They will grow, like other events, in time,—

There are many events in the womb of Time,
Which will be delivered. (ACT I, SC. 3)

(4) Villain's secret planning,—

- (a) Hell and Night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light. (ACT I, SC. 3)
- ✓(b) Knavery's plain face is never seen till used. (ACT II, SC. 1)
- (c) If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream. (ACT II, SC. 3)

79. THE VILLAIN Vs. THE FOOL.

Rod : I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent ; I have been to-night exceedingly well-cudgelled ; and I think the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains ; and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice. * * *

Iago : (To Rod) How poor are they that have not patience !
What wound did ever heal but by degrees ?
Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft.
And wit depends on dilatory time..... (ACT II, SC. 3)

80. PHILOSOPHY, (perverted by a Villain to suit his own ends) of Virtue, Will-power, Reason, Love, Sensuality, etc.

(Full of truths, half-truths, no-truths, false hopes and fallacies.)

Iago : Virtue ! a fig ! 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are gardens ; to the which our wills are gardeners : so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.

If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise

another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: but we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you call love, to be a sect or scion *

* (vide page 38, 39, text) (ACT I, Sc. 3)

81. VINDICATION.

Vindication of Desdemona's Honesty and Chastity,—

- (1) **Emi** : I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
 Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
 Remove your thought;— it doth abuse your bosom.
 If any wretch hath put this in your head,
 Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
 For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
 There's no man happy; the purest of their wives
 Is foul as slander. (ACT IV, Sc. 2)
- (2) **Oth** : She's like a liar gone to burning Hell;
 'Twas I that kill'd her.
- Emi** : O, the more angel she, and you the blacker devil!
- Oth** : She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.
- Emi** : Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.
- Oth** : She was false as water.
- Emi** : Thou art rash as fire, to say
 That she was false; O, she was Heavenly true!
- Oth** : Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.
 O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in Hell,
 But that I did proceed upon just grounds
 To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.
- Emi** : My husband!
- Oth** : Thy husband.
- Emi** : That she was false to wedlock?
- Oth** : Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,
 If Heaven would make me such another world
 Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
 I'd not have sold her for it. * * * (ACT V, Sc. 2)

82. WICKEDNESS, DESCRIBING WOMEN.

- (1) A wicked man's condemnation of all women,—
- (i) You are pictures out of doors;
 Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchens,
 Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
 Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds,
- (ii) You rise to play, and go to bed to work. (ACT II, Sc. 1)
- (2) A wicked man's description of a really Deserving Woman,—
- Des** : But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed?

one that in the authority of her merit did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself ?

Iago : She that was ever fair and never proud,
Had tongue at will and yet was never loud,..... (ACT II, SC. 1)

(3) **Women, true and false—(a contrast)—**

Des : Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind ?

Emil : There be some such, no question.

Des : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil : Why, would not you ?

Des : No, by this Heavenly light !

Emil : Nor I neither, by this Heavenly light ;
I might do't as well i' the dark.

Des : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

Emil : The world is a huge thing : 'tis a great price
For a small vice. (ACT IV, SC. 3)

83. WRONGS.

(1) **Bold and saucy wrongs,—**

Rod : But, I beseech you,
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,—
As partly I find it is,—that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,—
If this be known to you, and your allowance,
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs. (ACT I, SC. 1)

(2) **Wrong Rebuke,—**

Rod : But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence :
Your daughter, if you have not given her leave,
I say again, hath made a gross revolt,
Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes,
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and every where. Straight satisfy yourself :
If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the State
For thus deluding you. (ACT I, SC. 1)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

PART I.

PRELIMINARY.

The Drama: The Drama (meaning action) is that form of literature, in prose or poetry, which is intended for acting. It exhibits a picture of humanity,—of human life, in all its varied scenes, moods, aspects, and passions,—historical, comic and tragic,—tending towards a certain result or conclusion. It is a kind of story given by a writer, called a Dramatist, and told in dialogue by a different actor or actors on the stage in a theatre. We find dramatists, all over the world, dramatizing the various emotions and passions of man,—in order to discipline them,—such as Envy, Jealousy, Greed, Ambition, Lust, Cruelty, Vanity, Power, Tyranny, Despotism, Pride, Prestige, etc.

The Evolution of Drama: The progress of drama has followed more or less the same lines of evolution in all civilized countries,—from a crude dialogue between two persons on an improvised platform or stage with a simple plot, into an elaborate and finished piece of literature,—a grand work of Art such as Shakespeare has presented us. It is now a fertile and powerful source of entertainment, inspiration, and instruction to mankind.

Drama, one of the fruits of the creative genius of man: It is one of the most valuable branches of Literature in which the creative faculty of man moves, guides, instructs, refines and elevates man. It is the sister of Poetry. From our growing, world-wide and inter-national social conditions, and from our awakened and intensified sympathies, there have arisen "the multiplicity, the audacity, the intense vitality and versatility of the creative genius of modern ages. With Dante, it calls to judgment Popes, Emperors, and States; with Rabelais, Cervantes, and Swift, it paints in profound caricature human society as known to its contemporaries; with Scott, it glorifies the Past at the expense of the Present; with Byron and Shelley, it honours the Future at the expense of the Past and Present alike, nay, it actually idealises Revolt and Anarchy as higher manifestations of human freedom." And we might say that, with Shakespeare, his creative genius upholds and illustrates human solidarity all the world over.

The Intellectual Fraternity of man: The fact that a great writer, poët, or dramatist of one country is appreciated, loved and honoured by another as though he belonged to itself, is eloquent proof of the intellectual fraternity of mankind. It is the same common heart that beats, the same human blood which pulsates, with love and sympathy, with hope and aspiration, with praise and admiration, of the good, beautiful and true, wherever found through this vast frame of humanity. As the poet, J. R. Lowell, beautifully puts it,—

For, mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct beats along,
 Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or wrong;
 Whether conscious or unconscious, yet humanity's vast frame,
 Through its ocean-sunder'd fibres, feels the gush of joy or shame;
 In the gain or loss of one race, all the rest have equal claim.

PART II.

POSITION OF ART IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Before dealing with Shakespeare and his art, let us look into the condition and career of Art in England, prior to his day. It is true that some of the countries of Europe had just emerged from the Dark Ages; but still they did not, in fact, could not, so easily shake off the cramping effects of prevailing Catholicism,—its inquisition, its intolerance, its tyranny and repression, its blind beliefs, submissive habits, and narrow outlooks on life. On its political side, the world was then dominated by the Feudal system. This system was certainly an improvement on the older one. It formed the connecting link between the earlier and half-primitive society with its patriarchal, nomadic, personal rule, and the feudal tenure of land-holding with its partial introduction of settled law and order, and of ownership of land and property. The gradual disintegration and downfall of the Roman Empire led to the creation of various Feudal Kingdoms in Europe. And these preserved peace, order and discipline in their dominions in a rough and ready manner. William, the Conqueror, established Feudalism in England by parcelling out the land among such feudal chiefs or lords as were partial or loyal to him. In such times, there was practically no scope for the free development and practice of Art; for, people were then wholly occupied with the more urgent pursuits,—feudal warfare, land cultivation, home-life and catholic worship. Both Religion and Feudalism disciplined, curbed and tempered the wilder elements of man and tamed him into partial docility. They created the acts and ceremonies of homage, obedience and submission. There was thus engendered a general slavish mentality which accepted or acquiesced in the dogmas, rules and commands of the Church and State. Under feudal influence, there also arose the extravagant ideal of Chivalry, with its especial code of honor and exaggerated worship of Woman.

We shall follow the summary, given by Vernon Lushington, of the revolution in Art and Drama, introduced by Shakespeare:—

At the beginning of the 14th century, the old system (the product of Feudalism and Catholicism) showed signs of giving way. Then appeared the natus of the modern mind,—the daring effort of man to pierce through the antiquated supernatural faith and to explore the World of Man and Nature without any control. It was a revolutionary movement directed towards a total reorganization;

Though it tended to sap the foundations of the ruling powers of Church and State in Public Life, yet the old system retained its hold on the popular imagination and feminine morals.....The systematic struggle evoked immense rebellious passion and patriotic ardour and no less profound meditations and questionings. In less than a century, we see in Shakespeare the change in art as decisively manifest as, in Bacon and Descartes, the new departure in philosophy.....

Shakespeare was the shining chief of a band of poets—poets of the secular drama,—whose subject was *Man*. His compositions stand out in human history as the first poetic work of the highest rank in which human interest is obviously and avowedly paramount. They do not pretend to be religious, and no religion claims or can claim them but the Religion of Humanity. Even the very calling which this representative genius chose for his own—the *stage*—was now solemnly banned alike by Catholic order and by pious Puritanism. It was patronised, however, by the dictatorial sovereign and a few nobles, and supported by the people on modern terms,—namely, that the dramatist should provide them with entertainment—such entertainment was to be politically inoffensive (under penalties), and each spectator was to pay cash for his share of pleasure in the ‘play.’

Thus was “Art, made tongue-tied by Authority”—(Shakespeare’s own words in Sonnet 66)—and forced to beg its bread of spiritual inferiors. Such conditions tried Shakespeare (Sonnet III), but did not dismay him. If he had to be silent upon some very great things, on others he was free, and he might have his asides.....

Shakespeare struck, with new might and grander meaning, the common chord of Human Fraternity. This Fraternity was now in that it was now delivered from Theology and thereby nobly enlarged. It was to be as much ampler than Catholicism, limited by its absolute creed, as Catholicism was ampler than antique Patriotism: and it was to sound clearer and clearer through all the Future of Man. Shakespeare exhibited Human Solidarity (divorced from all religious implications) in two-fold form,—(1) the temporary, negative or levelling spirit, which is now so familiar to modern thought; and (2) the eternal, ever-growing spirit of organic fraternity.....

The levelling spirit Shakespeare often expressed with extreme poetic energy. And he associates it with bodily weakness, mental disorder, and madness (Richard II., Hamlet, Lear); in *Cymbeline*, Act IV. scene 2, we have this characteristic passage:—

Arviragus.—Are we not brothers?

Imogen.—So man and man should be;
But clay and clay differs in dignity,
Whose dust is both alike.

This levelling spirit, Shakespeare felt, had a work of destruction to do: but no more terrible condemnation of revolutionary equality was ever uttered than in the speech of the wise Ulysses, “Take but degree away”.....(*Troilus and Cressida*, Act I. scene 3)

Organic Fraternity, on the other hand, with its charm of benign truth, strength and wisdom, is felt everywhere in Shakespeare; yet it was necessarily imperfect..... He gives us the wit of peasants, but not the dignity of their service or the depth of their affections..... The old idea of Continuity was acknowledged only in the Family, the State, and Christendom; it had yet lovingly to *enfold the whole human race*, thus reconciling Order and Progress.....

Spontaneously, however, Shakespeare **embraced all the past** that was really accessible to him..... Similarly, though Shakespeare could not reach the conception of social and moral science, he stretched out eager hands towards it. No poet has shown such a love of generalising social and moral truths. These commonly appear as *findings* of mere experience—not of revelation. **Humanity**, in fact, though imperfectly conceived, **was the true object of Shakespeare's faith and love**. The free temper of his work, and many particular passages, leave little doubt that he largely shared in the theological scepticism then so common behind the stage. Assuredly neither Catholic nor Puritan, he was perhaps not even at heart a Christian. In this, as in other respects, he was a true modern; his creed was undetermined.....

PART III.

THE CONDITION OF DRAMA IN ENGLAND AT SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH.

In England: The Drama was at first confined to the Courts and Nobles' households. It gradually began to break through its confines and excite the love of the people at large. The companies of Actors—stationary or strolling—were protected by the Noble's license, without which they were liable to be punished as vagabonds. They carried this new form of entertainment within reach of the public by acting in the courtyards of inns or elsewhere for such remuneration as they could gain. **The old Miracle plays and Interludes** which dealt with religious topics, themes and things, were hitherto the principal medium for imparting instruction, tinged with religious meanings, morals and implications. They also provided popular entertainment. **They now gave way to the new form of Drama** which was distinguished from the former not only by a mixture of tones and styles—high and low, grave and gay, vulgar, witty and refined, prosaic and philosophical,—but also by a wide range of subjects, and a vivid reproduction of scenes and characters of low life. It also mingled comedy and tragedy irregularly, brought upon the stage men of all ranks and of all times, and trusted to greater variety and movement than to the beauty and aptness of language, or to the consistency or intricacy of plot. But this new form did not at first meet with the approval of the classical school which was then practically ruling the academic world.

... **Greek Drama V. English Drama:** Everywhere, Man had to pass through the earlier stages of Fetishism, Polytheism, and Monotheism; and thence, to the Secular and the Scientific. The drama in England was now outgrowing the theistic or theocratic stage. As Coleridge, comparing the stage of Greece with that of England, in the days of Elizabeth, remarks,—

The Greeks were polytheists, their religion was local; almost the only object of all their knowledge, art and taste, was their gods; and, accordingly, their productions were, if the expression may be allowed, statuesque, whilst those of the moderns (Elizabethans) are picturesque. The Greeks reared a structure which, in its parts and as a whole, filled the mind with the calm and elevated impression of perfect beauty and symmetrical proportion. The moderns (Elizabethans) also produced a whole, a more striking whole; but it was by blending various materials and fusing the parts together. The Greek stage had its origin in the ceremonies of a sacrifice... On the Greek Stage the chorus was always before the audience, the curtain was never dropped, as we should say....In the Greek drama there was no formal division into scenes and actsIt consisted in reality of 3 dramas, called together a trilogy, and performed consecutively in the course of one day.....Divide Lear into 3 parts, and each would be a play with the ancient Greeks.

Such were the form, composition and character of Greek drama. Though the growing spirit of the new form of English drama set at defiance the rules and limitations imposed by the classic Drama, still, Tragedy in the sense in which Shakespeare brought it out, had yet to come. Between 1580 and 1590, there arose in England a group of University men,—**Marlowe, Greene, Peele and others**, who became prominent for their dramatic productions of a new type. In their works, there was a spirit of daring and of poetry which was absent in the previous ones. To these men may be ascribed the origin of the English tragedy. In their works, there was the singleness of the theme which helped to elevate or distinguish the main figures and to intensify the catastrophe in accordance with the character of the tragic emotion dealt with.

In the Greek Tragedy, there was always an attempt to read, in the present ruin of the principal character or characters, a punishment for past crime, so that the whole plot looked like a picture of **the resistless laws of moral justice**. Speeches, a moralising chorus, actions not performed but reported in detail, a sense of divine retribution for sin,—these were typical of a Greek tragedy.

The advance made in English Tragedy: All these Greek devices were now dropped. Action was not verbally reported as in the Greek tragedy but was mostly made to take place before the spectators. A sense of greater dignity and awe was sought to be impressed. A notion of loftiness in the theme, and a feeling of profound pity, pathos and sadness marked the new tragedy. By witnessing the

play of the ordinary, though elemental, human passions, in their best as well as worst aspects, a keener and more permanent interest was excited in the spectators by an appeal to their sympathies, by a skilful subordination of many incidents to one purpose, and by the subtle implication of the absolute rightness in the horrible catastrophe. Such was the advance inaugurated by Marlowe and Kyd—the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare in England,—in the field of tragedy. As A Wynne remarks on the growth of English drama,—

A play has now become interesting for its delineation of character, not merely for its events or 'story.' One or two figures monopolise the attention by their lofty passions, their sufferings and their fate. We look on at a tremendous conflict waged between Will and Circumstance, between Right and Wrong, or we watch the gradual decay of Goodness by the action of a poisonous thought introduced into the mind. The plot is intensified. With resistless evolution, it bears the chief characters along to the fatal hour of decision or action, then drags them down the descent, which the wrong choice or the unwise deed suddenly places at their feet. Our sympathies are drawn out; we take sides in the cause, and demand that at least justice shall prevail at the end. There is an art in this evolution, a close interweaving of events, a chain of cause and effect; a certain harmony and balance are maintained, so that our feelings are neither jerked to extremes nor worn out by strain.

Verse has taken a mighty bound from formalism to the free intoxicating air of Poetry and Nature. Men and women no longer exchange dull speeches, they converse with easy spontaneity, and delight us by the beauty of their language.....But this is not enough. The supreme requirement is truth to human nature. It is not enough that the actors arrest our attention by their appearance, their speeches and deeds. Freaks and lunatics might do that. They must be human as we are, moved by impulses common, in some degree, to us all. Generally speaking, abnormality is weakness...It (the play) needs to be strongly built upon a foundation of natural qualities to achieve success. It must offer inspiration, present aspects of beauty, hold up a mirror to ourselves. It should be conceived as a noble instrument in the instruction and elevation of the people.

PART IV.

A CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS.

Such were the conditions of dramatic literature in England when Shakespeare, 'the Morning Star of the modern drama', rose to expound Life's practical philosophy through his creations. He was born at Stratford-on-Avon in April 1564. The later twenty years of his life, between 1590 and 1610, formed his 'creative' period, the histories and comedies coming out in the first decade, and the tragedies in the second, with Othello dating about 1604,

It has been a common and convenient practice to divide Shakespeare's career of Dramatic Compositions into four different periods, as—

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|-----------------|
| 1. The First Period | ... | about 1591—1594 |
| 2. The Second Period | ... | „ 1595—1601 |
| 3. The Third Period | ... | „ 1601—1609 |
| 4. The Fourth Period | ... | „ 1609—1611. |

The First Period : (1591—1594). This may be called as practically the period of *apprenticeship*. This is also otherwise known as *the Rhyming period*, because, during these years, Shakespeare appears to us more as a poet than a dramatist, preferring Rhyme to Blank Verse. The Poems, 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece' belong to this period. Thus, broadly, it may be said that Shakespeare's art was in the making in these years. He began mostly by adapting the plays of others, e.g., Titus Andronicus. Gradually, however, he diverted from Rhyme to Blank Verse. According to Swinburne's description of this transition,—

His evil angel, rhyme, yielded, step by step and note by note, to the the strong advance of that better genius (Blank Verse) which came to lead him into the loftier path of Marlowe.

The Plays,—Love's Labours Lost, Romeo and Juliet, Richard III, and Richard II, etc.,—are all productions of this period.

The Second Period (1595—1601). This is the period of *Mature Art*. His powers have matured and now take wider sweeps. He seems to have observed and learnt that man is not the embodiment of one single quality, humour, or passion. To this period belong the greatest of his comedies and historical plays. In short, this period indicates the perfection of romantic comedy and bright history-drama. Henry IV, Henry V, Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Midsummer Night's Dream, etc., are to be traced to this period.

The Third Period : (1601—1609). This may be styled the period of '*deeper passion*' or '*the thinking period*', or more precisely still, '*the period of tragedy*'. The dramatist is now more serious, sedate and philosophical. He tackles the perennial mysteries and problems of human life in all its aspects and moods. An intensity and breadth of feeling are observable in the productions of these years. There is not in them the tone of buoyancy of the previous plays. Various passions at their highest tension are treated about. The feeling of the romance of life is either practically absent or shown as delusive. The whole world looks corrupt. Good is shown as weak, and Evil as strong. Man and woman appear to be faithless. The constellation of the famous four tragedies,—Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth and Lear,—and also Julius Cæsar, Measure for Measure, Timon of Athens, and Antony and Cleopatra, belong to this period.

The Fourth Period : (1609—1611). This is the last and the *Romantic period*, full of serenity. The oppressive atmosphere of the previous plays is absent. Peace and content seem to have appeared after a long turmoil. There is no clash of will with will. Personal ambition or revenge no longer dominates man and his actions. There is contentment, and there is a well-earned peace and order. *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *Tempest*, etc., belong to this period.

PART V.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS IN GENERAL.

In speaking about Shakespeare's plays in general, Coleridge says,—

That law of unity, which has its foundations, not in the factitious necessity of custom, but in nature itself,—the unity of feeling (i.e. the same feeling, acting in the same way, always producing the same result)—is everywhere and at all times observed by Shakespeare in his plays. It seems to me that his plays are distinguished from those of all other dramatic poets by the following characteristics :—

(1) Expectation (i.e. expected results) in preference to surprise (i.e. unexpected, unnatural results suddenly sprung on us).

(2) Signal adherence to the great law of nature, that all opposites tend to attract and temper each other.

(3) Keeping at all times in the high road of (common, practical, real) life. Shakespeare has no innocent adulteries, no interesting incests, no virtuous vice; he never clothes impurity in the garb of virtue. If he occasionally disgusts a keen sense of delicacy, he never injures the mind : he neither excites, nor flatters passion, in order to degrade the subject of it : he does not use the faulty thing for a faulty purpose, nor carries on warfare against virtue, by causing wickedness to appear as *no* wickedness, through the medium of a morbid sympathy with the unfortunate. Vice never walks as in twilight (or dark), nothing is purposely out of its place. He inverts not the order of nature and propriety. He has no benevolent butchers nor any sentimental rat-catchers,.....

(4) Lastly, in Shakespeare, the heterogeneous is united, as it is in nature.....Shakespeare followed the main march of the human affections. He entered into no analysis of the passions, or faiths of men; but assured himself that such and such passions and faiths were grounded in one common nature, and not in the mere accidents of ignorance or disease. This is an important consideration, and constitutes our Shakespeare, the Morning Star, the Guide, and the Pioneer of true philosophy.

Shakespeare and the law of unities : In his compositions, Shakespeare disregarded the rules of unities. These were prescribed and observed as one of the essentials of a drama by the Greek and other classic dramatists. Far from detracting from the greatness

of his plays, this violation has added much. Dr. Johnson speaks of Shakespeare's 'violation of these laws, instituted and established by the joint authority of poets and of critics,' as follows,—

Shakespeare's histories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not subject to any of these laws.....In his other works, he has well enough preserved the unity of action.....But the unities of time and place have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor. The necessity of observing the unities of time and place, arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The critics hold that the mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance to reality. But it is time to tell the critics that the *representation is never mistaken for reality*. It will be asked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a just picture of a real original, as representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there feigned to be suffered or to be done. The reflection that strikes the heart is, not that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourselves may be exposed. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction: if we thought murders and treasons real, they would please no more. Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because *they bring realities to mind*. A play read affects the mind like a play acted.

It is therefore evident that the action is not supposed to be real. And it follows that, between the acts, a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass, and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may pass, in an hour, the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakespeare knew the unities (of time and place) and rejected them by design, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impossible to decide and useless to enquire. As nothing is essential to the fable but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions and, by circumscribing the extent of the drama, lessen its variety, I cannot regret this rejection. Such violations of rules (merely positive) become the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare.

PART VI.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY.

Tragedy, its theme Tragedy is primarily the story of one person who may be called the hero. In love-tragedies, of course, both the hero and the heroine occupy equally important positions. The hero is always a person of high degree. The story in the main deals with the hero's life, with his emotions and desires, his pricks and goads, his obstacles, troubles and difficulties, his worries and anxieties, which ultimately lead to his death. Since the

whole plan of the story is laid in troubles and sufferings, it essentially looks like a tale of woe and misery, and excites our pity which is one of the tragic emotions. Especially is it so, when we contrast the Hero's or the Heroine's previous happiness, prosperity and glory with his or her present suffering, downfall and death.

Shakespearean Tragedy: Now, turning to the tragedies which Shakespeare has left as a priceless legacy to posterity, it may be said broadly that they are passion-plays in the main. They constitute a series of studies with reference to the elements or qualities which in their endeavour to attain perfect manhood, lead to success or failure as they are well or ill adjusted to their surroundings. They also point to the necessity of attaining mastery over human passions. Tragedy means a sad and woeful ending either through an unfortunate accident or incident, or through the influence of one's own nature,—one's own passions, feelings, emotions. In the words of Wynne,—

If we consider such tragic careers as those of Hamlet, Lear Macbeth and Othello, we recognise that each might have come to a different conclusion, if it had not been for the blight of a father's death, or a single act of folly, of ambition, or of jealousy. These men all excite our sympathy, especially Hamlet whose tragedy is due, not at all to himself but to the overshadowing of another's crime. Macbeth and Othello are each introduced as men of noble qualities, with one flaw which events in the course of the play are yet to reveal.

The Chief Elements of Shakespearean Tragedy : These are (1) the play of human passions in their intensified and extravagant forms ; (2) overwhelming catastrophe ; (3) clearly-drawn characters that appeal to our sympathy or hate ; (4) impressive scenes ; and (5) a strong eventful plot.

Horror is an element in almost all powerful tragedies. It is hardly to be separated from any unexpected or violent death. And we call that death more monstrous or horrible when it is caused or produced by excessively selfish, one-sided, extravagant and vile motives or impulses. But the causes are always and essentially to be found deep down in the primary impulses of man, such as Ambition, Rivalry, Self-interest, Jealousy, Fear, Despair and Revenge or Retribution. These impulses are not originally vile. Our moral code does not cry against them as such, but against them when they are pushed beyond their proper limits ; when they become aggressive and trespass upon other people's rights ; when, after their normal or legitimate satisfaction, they become blind, callous, cruel, excessively parasitical in their pursuits. Then they become vices of the most mischievous and dangerous kind, and are called Lust, Greed, Rapacity, Cruelty, Intolerance, Malignity, Vindictiveness, Bloodthirstiness, etc. It is through these vices, through these feverish passions of the principal characters, that the catastrophe results.

The Cause of the Tragedy : The cause of suffering or of calamity is to be found, not elsewhere, but in the victims themselves. It is, more precisely, in the gradual development of certain traits of character in the hero. These traits are played upon by the villain of the piece, or by the powers of darkness, and work the hero's ruin. The centre of the tragedy may therefore be said to lie in this susceptibility, in the hero's character, to succumb to evil influence from outside. Though the hero is a man of rank or greatness, yet he is not presented to us as anything exceeding human, but only as any other man subject to most of the faults and failings of common humanity. Only, the same life as he leads with others, is made comparatively more strenuous and busy, and in this way he is raised above the common level. Different heroes are distinguished by different qualities,—for instance, Hamlet strikes us with his genius for thinking and philosophizing, while Othello and Coriolanus strike us with their mighty frame, dignity of bearing, valour, greatness and command. Still, there are imperfections in the make-up of each. As Prof. Bradley says,—

In almost all (the heroes), we observe a marked one-sidedness, a pre-disposition in some particular direction; a total incapacity, in certain circumstances, of resisting the force which draws in this direction; a fatal tendency to identify the whole being with one interest, object, passion, or habit of mind.

This particular flaw, defect, or imperfection, is the fundamental tragic trait in all Shakespeare's tragedies. This trait, combined with the native greatness of the hero, results in a violent commotion, which affects not only himself but his whole surroundings. The commotion excites our feelings, not only of sympathy and pity for his errors, but of admiration for his greatness, of terror and awe at the colossal ruin and waste involved in the tragedy. It renders the hero unable to meet certain special circumstances which he is faced with, while a lesser man might have easily got over them. The hero's greatness itself acts as a leaden weight which prevents him from getting out of the tangle woven by meanness or wickedness. He makes mistakes unwittingly, either by omission or commission,—mistakes which, when joined with other causes, bring utter ruin on him. His incapacity to see and foresee, to realize the subtle danger when it begins to appear and develop, is the fatal imperfection in the hero.

How are we moved by the Tragedy ? : The hero is often a great man and so wins our sympathy even while he is committing errors. Our sympathy or admiration for him does not abate a whit but keeps on to the last. At the end of the tragedy, we involuntarily exclaim with Prof. Bradley,—

What a piece of work is man, so much more beautiful and so much more terrible than we knew! But why should he be so, if this beauty and greatness only tortures itself and throws itself away?

It indeed looks like a vacant and painful mystery that men should be really so great and noble and yet fall in the end. This is the feeling which wells up in our hearts at the close of the tragedy. Prof. Bradley calls this feeling as the 'Impression of Waste'. It runs through the Tragedies as the Central feeling:—

Everywhere, from the crushed rocks beneath our feet to the soul of man, we see power, intelligence, life and glory, which astound us and seem to call for our worship; and yet, everywhere, we see them perishing, devouring one another, and destroying themselves, often with dreadful pain, as though they came into being for no other end. Tragedy is the typical form of this mystery.

But, on a deeper, scientific analysis of the subject, this mystery can be explained by the law of equilibrium. If only a part is good in the general mass of corruption and evil, then that part will easily get destroyed or lose its goodness and become corrupt. Innocence or Honesty, especially when it is coupled with wealth or affluence, in the midst of Thugs and rogues and double-dealers, individually or collectively, is a folly, a blunder, a crime, as it is sure to spell disaster to its possessor and be exploited and utilized by them for their own selfish purposes. The only remedy, therefore, is to lift and raise the average of intelligence, honesty and culture, all round. This, when widely and thoroughly done, will go to confirm or support the 'Moral Order' theory of the world.

PART VII.

THE MAIN OBJECT OR FUNCTION OF TRAGEDY.

Tragedy is a dramatic play which represents, in forcible style and elevated language, some great character,—his desires, emotions, feelings and thoughts,—and the pitfalls, obstacles, tangles, and finally death, that he meets with in his efforts to satisfy them. Pain and sorrow, horror and grief at the spectacle of suffering, pity and sympathy for the Good, loathing and disgust for the Bad or Wicked, approval or praise of what is Right, disapproval or condemnation of what is Wrong,—these are some of the feelings excited on reading a good tragedy, or on seeing it acted on the stage. The tragic elements of the hero and heroine, which lead to their suffering, agony and death, along with those of others, when calmly contemplated and studied in their course and results, have certainly a purifying influence on our affections. They teach us wisdom, patience, self-restraint, prudence and caution against hasty belief and judgment; and, when belief and judgment are properly and rationally formed, then, they teach us also the need for determined and just action.

William Hazlitt has the following brilliant remarks on the utility and function of Tragedy:—

It has been said that tragedy purifies the affections by terror and pity. That is, it substitutes imaginary sympathy for mere selfishness. It gives us a high and permanent interest, beyond ourselves, in humanity as such. It raises the great, the remote, and the possible, to an equality with the real, the little and the near. It makes man a partaker with his kind. It subdues and softens the stubbornness of his will. It teaches him that there are and have been others like himself, by showing him as in a glass what they have felt, thought and done. It opens the chambers of the human heart. It leaves nothing indifferent to us that can affect our common nature. It excites our sensibility by exhibiting the passions, wound up to the utmost pitch by the power of imagination or the temptation of circumstances, and corrects their fatal excesses in ourselves by pointing to the greater extent of sufferings and of crimes to which they have led others. Tragedy creates a balance of the affections. It makes us thoughtful spectators in the lists of life. It is the refiner of the species ; a discipline of humanity.

PART VIII.

NO SUPERNATURAL RULING POWER IN HIS TRAGEDIES.

Shakespeare's tragedies do not disclose any supernatural ruling power or moral force. When we see that men, so great and distinguished, should meet with such tragic end, despite their attainments, the question arises,—is there then any moral, ruling power, beyond or above men, seen or unseen, that directs the Hero to act so and fall so, or that rules the whole tragic world as conceived by Shakespeare ? We find no evidence of any such extra-mundane power. Shakespeare does not represent life as in any way influenced by Fates or Furies, by Spirits, Ghosts, or Gods. He has faithfully painted life as it is, and this fidelity is one of the bulwarks on which his greatness stands.

The fact remains, however, that we experience certain sensations or feelings on reading his tragedies. (1) One is, that his tragedy is terrible in the kind of the sufferings it depicts ; pitiable, in that innocent and great persons are done to death ; and inexplicable or mysterious, in that even such innocence and greatness have such an untimely end. (2) Another is, that, inspite of these experiences, we do not feel altogether forlorn, fate-ridden, helpless or desperate. From the first experience, it may be inferred that the Power or Force which appears to direct men, is not exactly of a moral kind. If it were, the tragedy will not appear so terrible or so mysterious to us as it does ; nor will the suffering excite pity and appear inexplicable but as the definite demand of the moral order, law, or justice. From the second experience, it follows that such Power is not exactly a ruthless Fate, cruel or blind to human happiness or goodness ; and if it were, we certainly would feel forlorn and helpless and impotent at the close of the tragedy.

Fate or Fatalism: Let us now see what part, then, Fate plays in the tragedies and how far it can be called the ultimate power that rules the tragic world of Shakespeare. The theory of Fate or Fatalism was inherited, along with many other false theories, from the past. It was born among the ancients who, for want of a better explanation, accepted it as a truth in nature. They held that acts and experiences and their consequences were all governed or predetermined by an immovable Fate, irrespective of the goodness or badness of such acts and experiences; that the course of things was prearranged and fixed over men's heads. Modern Rationalism, however, finds that Fatalism has generally been the creed of helplessness, despair, cowardice, impotence, resignation, or submission of the slaves to the hard and cruel conditions imposed upon them by the tyrannical power of Man, by his beliefs, customs and institutions. But this theory of Fate, though it still retains its popular hold, in all orthodox religions, is now exploded by Science. There is no place in the world of hard realities for Fate or Chance or Accident, in the strict, scientific sense of the term. Our belief in Chance or Fate, is simply an expression of our ignorance of the true causation of things and events. Everything,—every event, every relation, every state that exists,—exists of necessity; it is produced by preceding conditions and relations which have worked, although we, with our defective or limited intelligence, may not be aware of their presence or of their working, owing to their great subtlety or complexity. But there is an adequate cause for every effect,—no cause, no effect.

The law of Causation operates here as everywhere: It is true the tragic world, portrayed by the dramatist, is a world of action; and action is the translation of thought, feeling, or desire into reality. But we often find the heroes of the tragedy gaining, not the very thing they wanted, but its very opposite which they least expected. Macbeth permanently banished domestic Sleep and civic Peace from himself and his house, instead of enjoying the kingly power and prosperity expected after his murder of Duncan. Brutus never expected that he would work misery to his country and to himself. Iago never thought that he too will be caught in the web he had spun for others. "Othello agonises over an empty fiction and, meaning to execute solemn justice, butchers innocence and strangles love." Such happenings in the tragic world of Shakespeare would, on a hasty or superficial view, appear to lend weight to the theory of Fate, as embedded in the popular saying—"Man proposes, but God disposes." Again, the part played by what we, for want of a better understanding, call chance or accident in the formation and culmination of catastrophe in the tragedies, may seem to support the theory of Fatalism. For instance, Desdemona's losing the handkerchief just at the critical juncture, and Edmund's forgetting to withdraw or remit in time the order of capital punishment on

Cordelia as he wanted to do, seem to show that there is a Fate or Power, alike unseen and undefined, directing the destinies of man. But these incidents were due to human ignorance, inattention, perplexity, or forgetfulness, each of which was a fault, a moral flaw, an evil which led to certain other evils or results.

These instances notwithstanding, we do not find in Shakespeare any trace of Fatalism in its primitive, crude and absolute form. The actions and sufferings of the persons do not appear to us to be arbitrarily fixed beforehand without regard to their feelings, thoughts and volitions. The facts are not presented to us by Shakespeare, as if an implacable Power had any special favour for, or spite against, a particular person or persons, family, race or nation. We are made to feel that, in the ruin of nations, as of individuals, there *is* the evidence of their own responsibility. In individuals, the very character of the heroes or of other persons contributes to their tragic end. But for Othello's passion-induced credulity and incapacity to go deeper than the surface of men and things, he would not have met with the end he did. Were it not for Hamlet's too much thinking and criminal slowness in action, his life's history would have been differently told. Thus, circumstances and accidents apart, it is the rightness or wrongness of human action—or rather, of its springs—that are presented to us as the central fact in the tragedies and also as the root cause of the catastrophe. Besides, it may be affirmed that Shakespeare never considered Fate as the inevitable, ruthless, blind and reasonless arbiter that Superstition would have us regard it. The notion of Fate, at any rate in its extreme crudeness, is bound up with superstition and is the offspring of sheer ignorance and its consequent yearning or dotage after judicial astrology. This dotage has been censured with scathing severity by Shakespeare through the lips of Edmund in King Lear.

It is not Fate but a Moral Necessity : So, the power that rules in the tragic world of Shakespeare may at best be described as a 'moral necessity' or a 'moral justice.' This moral necessity in the tragedies is shown as the relation or link between a man's actions and the consequences of those actions. A man acts, impelled by his feelings, passions and desires, in a particular manner, and the consequences follow naturally and precisely in the wake of that act. We hold him responsible for these consequences, as they flow from his own actions. The catastrophe is therefore chiefly the logical outcome of man's own feelings and sentiments and the resulting actions. In this view, the catastrophe is in the nature of an 'example of justice.' Justice demands that the person or persons must reap the reward or suffer in a particular manner for the actions done. But, in a Tragedy, the manifestation and administration of that justice appear to be rather terrible. It cannot be otherwise, because tragedy is in its essence a terrible story. It is in consequence of this feeling of justice that,

in spite of the terror, pity and other kindred feelings we experience on reading the play, we acquiesce in the catastrophe. For example, we do not altogether feel that Othello's end is unjustified. Our sense of justice is satisfied. But this justice should not however be confounded with what is called 'Poetic Justice,' according to which,—

Prosperity and adversity are distributed in proportion to the merits (or demerits) of the agents. Such 'poetic justice' is in flagrant contradiction with the facts of life; and is absent from Shakespeare's tragic picture of life.

A kind of Social Justice or Retribution : When we closely consider the progress of action in the tragedies, we hold with Prof. Bradley that Shakespeare drives home the truth,—'The doer must suffer.' We also see that villainy never remains victorious or prosperous to the last. Neither Iago, nor Edmund, nor Iachimo, fully reaps and enjoys the fruits of the success each has planned with his own evil genius. Though there is ample illustration of the statement—'The doer must suffer,' yet we must admit that the doer does not suffer only to the extent of his doing or deserts. He suffers much more. For example, King Lear no doubt deserved to suffer for his folly, imperiousness, selfishness, love of flattery, and tyranny. But surely, he cannot be said to have deserved all the suffering he actually underwent. To say that he did, is to do violence to our healthy moral sense. Therefore, it cannot be said that the consequences of action in the tragedies are confined only to the extent warranted by that action. To say so, is to escape the very essence of Tragedy. The ends of Justice cannot be tied down to this or that limit. Thus, in the tragedies, tho' we are liable to feel that even 'good' is penalised,—as when we see men of practically good intentions, as Hamlet, Brutus, and Othello, coming to a sorrowful end,—yet we must remember that it is not 'good' alone that exclusively produces the tragic woe and suffering. 'Good' also no doubt does contribute to the tragedy. But it is not the 'good' in its entirety, but the 'good' which is subtly combined with its antithesis, 'evil,' in one and the same character. For example, Othello was morally good enough but, thrown into an evil environment, he was not intelligent enough, not clever and cunning enough, to probe deeply into motives, to go deeply into men and things. He was unduly confiding, too hasty and decisive. Hamlet, too, can give no excuse for his indecision, slowness and continued thinking. Macbeth, for all his goodness and services to the State at large, yielded to the whisperings of a guilty ambition. So, 'good' is not the chief element at the back of the tragedies, but 'evil' also. To quote Prof. Bradley's brilliant exposition,—

The main source, on the contrary, is in every case evil. And, what is more (though this seems to have been little noticed), it is in almost every case evil in the fullest sense, not mere imperfection

but plain moral evil. The love of Romeo and Juliet conducts them to death only because of the senseless hatred of their houses. Guilty ambition, seconded by diabolic malice, issuing in murder, opens the action in Macbeth. Iago is the main source of the convulsion in Othello; Goneril, Regan and Edmund,—in King Lear. Even when this plain moral evil is not the obviously prime source within the play, it lies behind it; the situation with which Hamlet has to deal, has been formed by adultery and murder.

PART IX

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.

What is Good or Evil? We may well affirm that 'Good' is the general happiness, or welfare, or what promotes a fuller and richer life. The end of each individual, group, nation, or combination, being happiness, prosperity or welfare, any act that is well-adjusted to this end is good. The good of each makes up the good of the whole, or to put it the other way about, the good of the whole society can be advanced only by advancing the good of each member composing that society. In this sense, all the moral (i. e. healthy, life-promoting) qualities or virtues make for 'Good'; whereas, their opposites i. e. life-destroying, parasitical, bad, corrupt, harmful qualities make for Evil. As Prof. Bradley has it,—

Evil exhibits itself everywhere as something negative, barren, weakening, destructive,—as a principle of death. It isolates, disunites, and tends to destroy not only its opposite, but itself. But that which keeps the evil man prosperous, makes him succeed, even permits him to exist, is the Good in him.....

The Sources of Evil: We have said before that even the very character of persons contributes to the tragedy. To all intents and purposes, the hero appears to be good and innocent. The 'evil' may appear to be not in him, but elsewhere,—around him, in his environment. But, principally, it is in *him*,—

The comparatively innocent hero still shows some marked imperfection or defect—irresolution (as in Hamlet); precipitance and pride (as in Lear); credulousness and excessive simplicity (as in Othello); excessive susceptibility to sexual emotions (as in Antony). These defects or imperfections are certainly, in the wide sense of the word, *evil*; and they contribute decisively to the conflict and catastrophe.

Thus, the Evil, whether elsewhere or in the characters themselves, comes into conflict with the 'Moral Good' which constitutes the 'Moral Force' or 'Moral Necessity' in the tragedies. If the powers of Good, pitted against Evil, are strong and united, Evil will finally succumb before the dominating forces of that 'Moral Good'. But, in being destroyed, it is also

seen to destroy the 'good' which is mixed with it, as the filth and flowers, the beautiful and ugly, in a house on fire, are consumed together in the general conflagration. Though the evil man may appear to be prosperous for a time, it must be understood that it is the 'good' in him that makes him prosperous. The moment that *that* 'good' is mastered by the evil in him, he falls from prosperity to ruin. Others, connected with him or around him, also fall. We feel that what remains, after the whole tragic struggle, is a world purged of all its impurities, with a fresh and fertile soil for the good to grow and thrive. In this view, Tragedy may be called an exhibition or an enactment of the reaction of Evil, brought on by the 'moral force', with all its incidental horror, pity and violent convulsion. *The tragedy lies*, not of course in the 'moral force' throwing out or purging the evil, but in the enormous and painful waste involved in the laboured process of that throwal or purgation. This view is well justified by Prof. Bradley,—

The whole system or order, against which the individual part shows itself powerless, seems to be animated by a passion for perfection. We cannot otherwise explain its behaviour towards 'evil.' Yet it appears to engender (contain) this evil within itself; and, in its efforts to overcome and expel it, it is agonised with pain and driven to mutilate its own substance, and to lose not only 'evil' but priceless 'good.'

This idea of 'Moral Force or Necessity' as a ruling power in Shakespearian tragedies is indeed markedly different from the idea of a blank Fate, or of a divine Ruler. Sakespeare never attempted to hold a brief for any God in His dealings with men, or to paint the universe as exclusively a 'Divine Comedy' or 'a Divine Tragedy.' He was writing tragedy, and 'tragedy would not be tragedy, if it were not a painful mystery' to some extent.

PART X.

SHAKESPEARE'S PERSONAL VIEWS.

Had Shakespeare any views of his own, apart from those of the characters depicted in his Histories, Comedies and Tragedies? If so, what were his convictions and opinions about human life, purpose or destiny; about god, soul, and a future life; about social environment and heredity; about natural distinctions, aptitudes and tendencies,—physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, æsthetic; about rich and poor; about monarchy, aristocracy, mobocracy, and democracy; about legal and social reform; about human amelioration; about the various social problems that continue to agitate the mind of man? No doubt, we come across different opinions, expressed by his many and varied characters. There are passages, pointing to the influence of the stars; to another life beyond our vision; to some divinity shaping our ends; to man's incapacity to control his fate; or to Life as the fitful fever,

or as the stuff of a dream, or a tale told by an idiot,—signifying nothing; etc. etc. These beliefs, as well as their opposites in strange contrasts, can be met with in Shakespeare's works. But they are not his own opinions, but those of his characters, in different psychological states, as when they become defeated, disappointed, or perplexed; or placed in trying and tormenting conditions and situations. As Ingersoll explains,—

But we must not mistake what the characters say, for the opinion of Shakespeare. (1) No one can believe that Shakespeare regarded Life as "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." That was the opinion of a murderer (Macbeth), surrounded by avengers, and whose wife,—partner in his crimes, and troubled with thick-coming fancies,—had gone down to her death. (2) Most actors and writers seem to suppose that the lines called 'The Seven Ages' contain Shakespeare's view of human life. Nothing could be further from the truth. The lines were uttered by a cynic (Jaques, in "As You Like it"), in contempt and scorn of the human race.....

It may be, that, in the greatest utterances of the greatest characters, in the supreme moments, we have the real thoughts, opinions and convictions of Shakespeare. But of all writers, Shakespeare is the most impersonal. He speaks through others and the others seem to speak for themselves. The didactic is lost in the dramatic. He does not use the stage as a pulpit to enforce some maxim. He is as reticent as Nature.

He idealizes the common and transfigures all he touches; but he does not preach. He was interested in men and things as they were. He did not seek to change them, but to portray. He was Nature's mirror,—and in that mirror Nature saw herself.

Shakespeare certainly had his own views and opinions about everything in this world. It appears to me that his view of human life and its improvement was based on the two fundamental principles of Heredity and Environment.* All his Histories,

*By **Environment** is meant the irresistible action, the perceptible or imperceptible influence, of surroundings of an organism, or the effect of action and reaction of such surroundings on the life and function of a plant or of an animal. "The plant or animal has obviously a strong unity of its own, but even that is in part due to ancestral welding under the hammers of the environment." In the struggle for existence, between individuals and races, the influence of the internal and external conditions is always manifest. But the susceptibilities to, and degrees of, that influence are varied. For example, the passive, young and simple forms of life are more susceptible to external circumstances than the active, complex and full-grown ones. As to the degree, "the dints of the environment may be deep or superficial, very direct or very remote in their results. A primary influence from without may have more than one result within the organism; by starting correlated variations. The influence may remain without apparent result in the individual, and yet the nemesis may be evident in the offspring."

Comedies and Tragedies go to illustrate this fact. Environment, in his view, supports, confirms, modifies, and explains the factor of Heredity.* A good environment, he repeatedly shows, is brought about and furthered by good conditions, and will in time produce or promote a good heredity. But what makes for good conditions? Just laws and customs and institutions; beneficial and healthy education of the emotions; good mental equipment; love of truth and science; freedom of thought, speech, and action; rationality or sway of reason in every department of life; more light, more information and thought on any subject.

We must go on introducing, at every stage of our progress, a good environment by all the sane and scientific methods; and only then will baseness, rascality, immorality, injustice in all its varied forms, and unworthiness in all places, be kept down and suppressed; and only then will the best, the noblest and the most beautiful in life will have a chance to thrive, and not fall an easy victim to the influences of the ugly, lowly and destructive passions of our baser self. In such an environment, our baser emotions will be purged of their impurities, and our higher and nobler instincts, passions and feelings will have scope to seek their legitimate satisfaction; and the whole strength of our being, of our Will and Intellect, will be concentrated on the health, happiness and prosperity of the whole of mankind instead of on that of the narrow circle of individual self, caste, race or country.

The creation of such a wide-spread, wholesome environment is the prime need, the moral necessity, all over the world. And until this is done, all our plans and policies, conceived and pursued in selfish obstinacy, callousness, or hostility to others, will continue to be opposed and thwarted. It is owing to the lack of such general wholesome environment that we see the physical and moral forces of one race or nation coming into constant conflict or collision with those of other races and nations,—the demand for co-operation from one being often met by stubborn or silent non-co-operation from others

*By **Heredity** we mean the principle of inheritance, or the biological law, by which living beings tend to transmit or repeat their physical and psychical qualities to their children or descendants. All progeny or products, generated by sexual or non-sexual process of reproduction, owe their essential features to their parent or parents. This law is summed up in the proverb, 'Like begets like,' or 'Like tends to beget like.' The same holds good of the physical, mental and moral qualities, such as stature, form, health and strength; of cunning and sharpness; of goodness and beauty; or of their opposites.

PART XI.

ANTHOLOGY OF SOME ADMIRABLE CRITICISMS AND APPRECIATIONS.

Some of the great intellects of the world,—poets, philosophers, writers and scholars,—have studied Shakespeare and become enraptured with his Art as displayed in his works. They have expressed their feelings, in thoughts and words of beauty, force, and truth. A few extracts from their beautiful and instructive exposition of Shakespeare's excellences are here given, in the hope that they will help the student and general reader in properly appreciating the master-mind.

(1) Ben Jonson (1623) —

Soul of the Age!
The applause! delight! the wonder of our stage!

* * *

Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read and praise to give.

* * *

He was not of an age, but for all time!
In him, the Muses still were in their prime.
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines.

* * *

For, a good poet's made, as well as born,
And such wert thou. Look, how the father's face
Lives in his issue, even so the race
Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines
In his well-turned and true-filed lines;
In each of which, he seems to shake a lance,
As brandish'd at the eyes of Ignorance.
Sweet swan of Avon! What a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,

* * *

Shine forth, thou star of Poets, and with rage
Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage.

(2) John Milton (1630) —

What needs my Shakespeare, for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a Star-pointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?

Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live-long monument;

* * *

And so sepulcher'd in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a Tomb would wish to die.

(3) John Dryden (1668—70) :—

To begin, then, with Shakespeare ; he was the man who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the *largest and most comprehensive soul*. All the images of Nature are still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily ; when he describes anything, you more than see it, *you feel it too*.

Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation : *he was naturally learn'd* ; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature ; he looked inwards and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike ; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. For, he is the greatest, without a peer.....He is many times flat, insipid ; his Comic Wit degenerating into clenches, his Serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great, when some great occasion is presented to him. No man can say he ever had a fit subject for his Wit and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of Poets.....He understood the nature of the Passions thoroughly.

His Failings : Yet I cannot deny that he has his failings ; but they are not so much in the passions themselves, as in his manner of expression. *He often obscures his meaning* by his words, and sometimes makes it unintelligible. I will not say of so great a Poet, that he distinguish'd not the blown, puffy style from true sublimity. But I may venture to maintain that *the fury of his Fancy* often transported him beyond the bounds of Judgment, either in coining of new words and phrases, or racking words, which were in use, into the violence of a Catachresis. 'Tis not that I would explode the use of Metaphors from passions, for Longinus thinks 'em necessary to raise the passion ; but to use 'em at every word, to say nothing without a Metaphor, a Similie, an Image or description, is, I doubt, to smell a little too strongly of the Buskin, I must be forced to give an example of expressing passion figuratively ; *vide, the exclamation against Fortune*, quoted in his Hamlet, *but writt'n by some other Poet*.

Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune ! All you Gods,
In general Synod, take away her power,
Break all the spokes and fallyes from her Wheel,
And bowl the round Nave down the hill of Heav'n
As low as to the Fiends. * * *

What a pudder is here kept in raising the expression of trifling thoughts ! Would not a man have thought that the Poet had been bound Prentice to a Wheel-wright, for his first Rant ? and had follow'd a Ragman, for the coat and blanket, in the second passage (here omitted) ? Fortune is painted on a wheel ; and therefore, the writer in a rage, will have Poetical Justice done upon every member of that Engine ; after this execution, he bowls the Nave downhill, from Heaven, to the Fiends : (an unreasonable, long mark a man would think).....

Wise men would be glad to find a *little sense couch'd under all those pompous words* ; for, *Bombast* is commonly the delight of that Audience which loves Poetry but understands it not : and as

commonly has been the practice of those Writers who, not being able to infuse a natural passion into the mind, have made it their business to ply the ears and to stun their Judges by the noise.

But Shakespeare does not often thus; for, the passions, in his Scene between Brutus and Cassius, are extremely natural; the thoughts are such as arise from the matter; and the expression of 'em not viciously figurative. I cannot leave this subject before I do justice to that Divine Poet, by giving you one of his passionate descriptions: 'tis of Richard II, when he was depp'd and led in triumph through the Streets of London by Henry of Bollingbroke. The painting of it is so lively, and the words so moving, that I have scarce read anything comparable to it, in any other language. Suppose you have seen already the fortunate Usurper passing through the crowd and follow'd by the shouts and acclamations of the people; and now behold King Richard entering upon the Scene, consider the wretchedness of his condition and his carriage in it, and refrain from pity if you can.

As in a Theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-grac'd Actor leaves the Stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious :
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on Richard : no man cry'd, 'God save him':
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home;
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head,
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off.

His face so combated with tears and smiles
(The badges of his grief and patience)
That, had not God (for some strong purpose) steel'd
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,
And Barbarism itself have pity'd him.

* * *

Fletcher and Jonson (contemporary Dramatists) were the limbs of Shakespeare. * * *

As when a Tree's cut down, the secret root
Lives under ground, and thence new branches shoot,
So, from old Shakespeare's honour'd dust, this day,
Springs up and buds a new reviving Play.
Shakespeare, who (taught by none) did first impart
To Fletcher Wit, to labouring Johnson Art;
He Monarch-like gave those his subjects law,
And is that Nature which they paint and draw.

* * *

But Shakespeare's magick could not copy'd be;
Within that Circle none durst walk but he. (1670)

(4) Addison, in 'the Spectator' (1711—14):—

Among great Geniuses, those few draw the admiration of all the world upon them, and stand up as the *Prodigies of Mankind*, who, by the mere strength of natural Parts, and without any assistance of Art or Learning, have produced works that were the

Delight of their own Times and the Wonder of Posterity! There appears something nobly wild and extravagant in these great natural Geniuses, that is infinitely more beautiful than all the Turn and Polishing of what the French call a *Bel Esprit*, by which they would express a Genius refined by Conversation, Reflection, and the Reading of the most polite Authors

It shews a greater Genius in Shakespear to have drawn his *Calyban*, than his *Hotspur* or *Julius Caesar*: The one was to be supplied out of his own Imagination, whereas the other might have been formed upon Tradition, History and Observation.....

There is a kind of Writing, wherein the Poet quite loses sight of Nature, and entertains his reader's imagination with the Characters and actions of such persons as have, many of them, no existence, but what he bestows on them. Such are *Fairies*, *Witches*, *Magicians*, *Demons*, and departed Spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls the Fairy way of writing which is, indeed, more difficult than any other that depends on the Poet's Fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own invention... Among the English, Shakespear has incomparably excelled all others. That noble Extravagance of Fancy, which he had in so great perfection, thoroughly qualified him to *touch the weak, superstitious part of his Reader's Imagination*; and made him capable of succeeding, where he had nothing to support him besides the strength of his own Genius. There is something so wild and yet so solemn in the speeches of his Ghosts, Fairies, Witches and the like Imaginary Persons, that we cannot forbear thinking them natural, tho' we have no Rule by which to judge of them, and must confess, if there are such Beings in the World, it looks highly probable they should talk and act as he has represented them.....

Our inimitable Shakespear is a *stumbling-block to the whole Tribe of these rigid Critics*. Who would not rather read one of his Plays, (where there is not a single rule of the stage observed) than any production of a modern Critic, where there is not one of them violated? Shakespear was indeed born with all the Seeds of Poetry and may be compared to the Stone in Pyrihus's Ring which, Pliny tells us, had the Figure of Apollo and the Nine Muses in the Veins of it, produced by the spontaneous Hand of Nature, without any Help from Art.....

(5) Alexander Pope (1725):—

Let me mention some of his principal and **characteristic Excellencies**, for which (notwithstanding his defects) he is justly and universally elevated above all other Dramatic Writers.....If ever any Author deserved the name of an Original, it was Shakespear. Homer himself drew not his art so immediately from the fountains of Nature; it proceeded thro' Egyptian strainers and channels, and came to him not without some tincture of the learning, or some cast of the models, of those before him. *The Poetry of Shakespear was Inspiration indeed*: he is not so much an Imitator, as an Instrument, of Nature; and 'tis not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks thro' him.

His characters are so much Nature herself, that 'tis a sort of injury to call them by so distant a name as Copies of her. Those of other Poets have a constant resemblance which shews, that they receiv'd them from one another, and were but multipliers of the same image: each picture, like a mock-rainbow, is but the reflexion of a reflexion. But every single character in Shakespear is as much an Individual, as those in Life itself; it is as impossible to find any two like To this life and variety of Character, we must add the wonderful preservation of it; which is such throughout his plays that, had all the Speeches been printed without the very names of the Persons, I believe one might have apply'd them with certainty to every speaker.

The Power over our Passions was never possess'd in a more eminent degree, or display'd in so different instances. Yet, all along, there is seen *no labour, no pains to raise them, no preparation to guide our guess to that effect, or be perceiv'd to lead toward it, But the heart swells, and the tears burst out, just at the proper places.* We are surpris'd the moment we weep; and yet, upon reflection, find the passion so just, that we shou'd be surpriz'd if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment. . . . Again, how astonishing is it, that the passions, directly opposite to these, *Laughter and Spleen* are no less at his command; that he is not more a master of *the Great* than of *the Ridiculous* in human nature; of our noblest tendernesses, than of our vainest foibles; of our strongest emotions, than of our idlest sensations!

Nor does he only excel in the Passions: *in the coolness of Reflection and Reasoning he is full as admirable.* His sentiments are not only in general the most pertinent and judicious upon every subject, but, by a talent very peculiar, something between Penetration and Felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends. *This is perfectly amazing from a man of no education or experience* in those great and public scenes of life which are usually the subject of his thoughts. So that he seems to have known the world by Intuition, to have look'd thro' human nature at one glance and to become the only Author, that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the Philosopher and even the Man of the World may be born as well as the Poet.

(6) Joseph Warton, (1753).—

As Shakespeare is sometimes blameable for the conduct of his fables, which have no unity; and sometimes for his diction, which is obscure and turgid; so, his characteristic excellencies may possibly be reduced to these *three general heads*: his lively creative imagination; his strokes of nature and passion; and his preservation of the consistency of his characters. . . . But to portray characters naturally, and to preserve them uniformly, *requires such an intimate knowledge of the heart of man* and is so rare a portion of felicity as to have been enjoyed, perhaps, only by two writers, Homer and Shakespeare.

Of all the plays of Shakespeare, *the Tempest* is the *most striking instance of his creative power.* He has there given the reins to his

boundless imagination, and has carried the romantic, the wonderful, and the wild, to the most pleasing extravagance. *The scene* is a desolate island, and *the characters* the most new and singular that can well be conceived; a prince who practises magic; an attendant spirit, a monster, the son of a witch; and a young lady who had been brought to this solitude in her infancy, and had never beheld a man except her father..... *Caliban* is the son of a witch begotten by a demon. the sorceries of his mother were so terrible, that her countrymen banished her into this desert island as unfit for human society: in conformity, therefore, to this diabolical propagation, he is *represented as a prodigy of cruelty, malice, pride, ignorance, idleness, gluttony, and lust.* He is introduced with great propriety, cursing Prospero and Miranda whom he had endeavoured to defile; and his execrations are artfully contrived to have reference to the occupations of his mother:

As wicked dew, as e'er my mother brush'd
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen,
Drop on you both. * * *
* * * All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

The gross ignorance of this monster is represented with delicate judgment: he knew not the names of the sun and moon, which he calls the bigger light and the less; and he believes that Stephano was the man in the moon, whom his mistress had often shown him: and when Prospero reminds him that he first taught him to pronounce articulately, his answer is full of malevolence and rage,—

You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse.....

Is this the properest return for such a fiend to make for such a favour? The spirits, whom he supposes to be employed by Prospero perpetually torment him, and the many forms and different methods they take for this purpose, are described with the utmost liveliness and force of fancy,—

Sometimes like apes, that mope and chatter at me,
And after bite me; then like hedge-hogs, which
Lie tumbling in my bare-foot way, and mount
Their prick at my foot-fall: sometimes am I
All wound with adders who, with cloven tongues,
Do hiss me into madness.

It is scarcely possible for any speech to be more expressive of the manners and sentiments, than that in which *our poet has painted the brutal barbarity and unfeeling savageness of this son of Sycorax*, by making him enumerate, with a kind of horrible delight, the various ways in which it was possible for the drunken sailors to surprise and *kill his master*:

—————There, thou may'st brain him,
Having first seiz'd his books; or with a log
Batter his skull; or paunch him with a stake;
Or cut his wezand with thy knife—————

He adds, in allusion to his own abominable attempt, "above all, be sure to secure the daughter; whose beauty, he tells them, is

incomparable." The chains of Miranda could not be more exalted, than by extorting this testimony from so insensible a monster.....

In this play, Shakespeare takes occasion obliquely to *satirise the prevailing passion for new and wonderful sights*, which has rendered the English so ridiculous. "Were I in England now," says Trinculo on first discovering Caliban, "and had but this fish painted, not an holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian."

(6)^a Henry Home, (Lord Kames),—a Scotch Judge: (1762)

Dramatic Representation of Passion. This descriptive manner of representing passion, is a very cold entertainment; our sympathy is not raised by description; we must first be lulled into a dream of reality, and everything must appear as passing in our sightIn our late English tragedies, we sometimes find sentiments tolerably well adapted to a plain passion: but we must not, in any of them, expect a sentiment expressive of character; and, upon that very account, our late performances of the dramatic kind are for the most part intolerably insipid.

[N B. Kames proceeds to illustrate the difference between '*sentiments* that appear the legitimate offspring of passion' and '*sentiments* that are descriptive only'.]

Shakespeare is superior to all other writers in *delineating passion*. It is difficult to say in what part he most excels, whether in moulding every passion to the peculiarity of character, or in discovering the sentiments that proceed from various tones of passion, or in expressing properly every different sentiment. He disgusts not his reader with general declamation and unmeaning words, too common in other writers: *his sentiments are adjusted to the peculiar character and circumstances of the speaker*; and the propriety is not less perfect between his sentiments and his diction.

Critics ought to consider that it is *easier to discover his blemishes* which lie generally at the surface, *than his beauties*, which cannot be truly relished but by those who dive deep into human nature. One thing must be evident to the meanest capacity, that wherever passion is to be display'd Nature shows itself mighty in him, and is conspicuous by the most delicate propriety of sentiment and expression.....Shakespeare excels all the ancients and moderns in *his knowledge of human nature*, and in unfolding even the most obscure and refined emotions. This is a rare faculty, and of the greatest importance in a dramatic author; and it is that faculty which makes him surpass all other writers in the comic as well as the tragic vein.

Shakespeare's Style: Abstract or general terms have no good effect in any composition for amusement: because it is only of particular objects that images can be formed. Shakespeare's style in that respect is excellent; every article in his descriptions is particular, as in nature.....It was one of Homer's advantages, that he wrote before general terms were multiplied: the superior genius of Shakespeare displays itself in avoiding them after they were multiplied.

(7) Lord Lyttleton : (1765):—

No other author had ever so copious, **so bold, so creative an imagination**, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, the humours, and the sentiments of mankind. *He painted all characters from kings down to peasants, with equal truth and equal force.* If human nature were destroyed and no monument were left of it except his works, other beings might know what man was from those writings.

Consider from how thick a darkness of barbarism the genius of Shakespeare broke forth ! What were the English, and what (let me ask you) were the French dramatic performances, in the age when he flourished ? The advances he made towards the highest perfection both of Tragedy and Comedy are amazing ! In the principal points, **in the power of exciting terror and pity, or raising laughter** in an audience *none yet has excelled him*, and very few have equalled.

(8) Dr. H. Ulrici, on Shakespeare's Idea of Tragedy and Comedy; (1835-1840):

Shakespeare's general view of human life is in accordance with his conception of the idea of tragedy and comedy ; the latter confirms and explains the former, and *vice versa*. For, if *divine justice is one with moral necessity*, and if it is conceived as the guiding principle of history, then it follows that, not only the common, the low and the unworthy, but also that which is greatest, noblest and most beautiful in human life, must fall a victim to suffering, misery and death, as soon as it is at variance with the moral necessity. This at once shows the **tragic aspect** of Shakespeare's view of life. With him the tragic element consists invariably in the suffering and final ruin of what is great, noble, and beautiful in man, as a consequence of his own weakness, one-sidedness and want of character. *The heroes of the tragedy fall*, either by seeking to obtain what is good and beautiful, only in order to satisfy their selfish passions,or by one-sidedly placing their whole strength of Will in some special possession, some special right, and thereby neglecting everything else *This neglect defies the moral necessity* which demands greater consideration for the whole of humanity than for the individual man.....

In Comedy, *caprice necessarily manifests itself in acts of silliness and folly, in weakness and perversities of all kinds* ; because, being antagonistic to reason and moral necessity, in its activity, it assumes all the above forms..... As chance and caprice, weakness and perversity, error and folly, paralyse each other, the result is that, *after all, that which is right and rational, takes place and proves itself the truly permanent.....* The mind appears in its disturbed state, in its defection from itself; but at the same time, in its consciousness of self, it tries, to return to itself (to what is good and true). This is what comedy means. This, in fact, is the comic view of human life according to Shakespeare's idea ; for, in him *the ridiculous* depends, so to speak, upon the mind being tickled ; it is invariably founded on a contradiction, a contradiction to the immediate feeling and perception.....It

is ridiculous to speak of a thing as actually ridiculous in itself. The ridiculous is, in all cases, ridiculous only by the way in which the object is perceived or conceived; there is absolutely nothing that is generally ridiculous, no object which as such is purely ridiculous. But there certainly is a general comic view of life within which everything special seems ridiculous..... The *comic in art* at least, is nothing but such a view and form of representing things; it does not only *consist in single witticisms, jokes, situations and characters*, but *in the contradiction* which runs through the whole representation, hiding itself in its subject..... The comic in art may therefore be termed *the dialectics of irony* which do not look upon human life one-sidedly,—only in its contradictions and absurdities, only as controlled by chance and caprice in all shapes, but which themselves try to correct the one-sidedness of the conception, by allowing chance and caprice to neutralise themselves and to be converted into their opposites. These dialectics (or principles of reasoning) are also reflected in that peculiar shape of jest and wit, which in Shakespeare prefers to express itself *in the form of puns*. Puns (intentionally and unintentionally) turn words into their opposites, sense into nonsense, wit into absurdity, seriousness into jest, and conversely. Puns are therefore the dialectics of irony in the form of a linguistic expression.

This treatment and conception of the 'comic' produces of itself *a thoughtful joyousness* which is spread over the whole representation. *We find our own life, all our human weaknesses and perversities reflected in the world represented.* But this cannot occasion any pain; for, we find that all the perplexities of the heart and mind, all the accidents to which our life is exposed, become neutralized and corrected. The 'comic' whispers to us the consoling thought that what is good and right happens in our world, not merely as a result of our own trouble and labour, but even contrary to our will. In fact, the follies and perversities which neutralise each other, bring into view *the imperishable goodness or nobility of human nature concealed in them*..... It is this that produces that genial exuberance of spirits, that *Vive la bagatelle* which, in Shakespeare's best comedies, is the soul of his representation.

But this joyousness is true joyousness, only because it at the same time *contains a deep earnestness*. For, the comic side of the Shakespearian view of life is not confined to exhibiting mere human caprice, any more than his tragic view is limited to setting forth merely the moral necessity. *In tragedy*, suffering and death follow the violation of the moral law, not that man shall thereby be ruined but that he may truly live; in other words, that he may rise purified out of the conflict into which he has fallen, out of the one-sidedness and delusion of passion, up to that which alone is true life, in harmony with itself and, being thus in harmony with ethical necessity, obtains true freedom and contentment..... This is the conciliatory, comforting, elevating element which is clearly and distinctly apparent in Shakespeare's better tragedies: *In the comic view of life also*, it is not exclusively caprice and chance that rule; life is also governed by moral necessity, the power of what is right and

good. It is this moral power which, by its hidden counterplay, baffles the perverse resolves and actions of men, and turns them into their opposites.....In such cases, the comic is sometimes mixed with a high earnestness which borders upon the tragic, for instance, in 'Much Ado About Nothing' and in 'The Merchant of Venice,' etc.

Tragedy and Comedy in Shakespeare, therefore, are merely *two different forms of Art with the same substance*, merely the two sides of his poetical view of human life. They can, accordingly, pass over directly one into the other, and meet without constraint in the same drama. And yet Shakespeare has at times been *reproached for not having kept tragedy and comedy strictly apart from each other* and, more especially, for having introduced scenes of low comedy into his overpowering tragedies.....But it all depends upon the manner in which the comic is treated; it is not every species of comedy that can be linked to tragedy. But there is a form (and it is pre-eminently the form of the comic peculiar to Shakespeare) which *conceals a deep ethical earnestness under the disguise of jest* and is thereby raised above the comic. This form has been called *humour*.

Humour, in the narrower sense of the word, rests upon a double basis, upon an idealism of the judgment, or of that faculty of the mind which judges all human affairs by the highest ideal. This ideal is used as a standard for measuring and comparing; and accordingly, it sees human affairs only in their smallness, impropriety and perversity. But humour also rests upon a realism of heart, of a warm heart full of feelings, to which love and devotion are a necessity. This realism encourages and values all human affairs, chiefly those that are small, weak, and in want of help. Midway between these sharp contrasts, sometimes inclining more towards the one, sometimes more towards the other, Wit is acting in concert with a rich imagination, and playing from one to the other in such a manner that both are placed in the closest connection, penetrating each other and passing over one into the other.....The Duke of Kent and the fool in 'King Lear;' the grave-diggers in 'Hamlet;' the porter in 'Macbeth;' possess something of this humour which does not disturb, but raises and increases the effect of the tragic element. In my opinion, these scenes do not disturb the effect of the tragic element. The contrast, exhibited by the Comic scenes and incidents, in the people—(by the happy limitation of their desires and thoughts; by their careless indifference concerning everything that does not directly touch upon the wants of practical life; by the fresh rough realism which characterises popular wit)—as compared with the tragic heroes, with their grand ideas and ideal strivings, their mighty emotions and passions (the source of their sorrows and sufferings),—rather enhances the effect of the Tragic Element.....

- (9) Maurice Morgan makes these scientific observations on the nature of Shakespeare's delineation of his dramatic Characters,—(1777)

Bodles of all kinds, whether of metals, plants or animals, are supposed to possess certain first principles of 'being', and so have an

existence independent of the accidents which form their magnitude or growth. Those accidents are supposed to be drawn in from the surrounding elements, but not indiscriminately. *Each plant, and each animal, imbibes those things only which are proper to its own distinct nature*, and which have besides such a secret relation to each other as to be capable of forming a perfect union and coalescence. But so variously are the surrounding elements mingled and disposed, that each particular body, even of those under the same species, *has yet some 'peculiarity' of its own.*

Shakespeare appears to have considered the being and growth of *the human mind as analogous to this system.* There are certain qualities and capacities, which he seems to have considered as First Principles. The chief of these are *certain energies of courage and activity*, according to their degrees: these go together with different degrees, and sorts of sensibilities, *and a capacity* varying likewise in the degree of *discernment and intelligence*. The rest of the composition is drawn in from an atmosphere of surrounding things; that is, *from the various influences* of the different laws, religions, and governments in the world; from those of the different ranks and inequalities in society; and from the different professions of men; (from the various influences of differing climate, locality, habitude, habit, temperament, association and training); *each encouraging or repressing passions of particular sorts, and inducing different modes of thinking and habits of life.* And he seems to have known intuitively what those influences in particular were, which this or that original constitution would most freely imbibe, and which would most easily associate or coalesce with.....He found no difficulty in marking every individual, even among characters of the same sort, with something peculiar and distinct. *As, for example,—*

Be thus when thou art dead,
And I will kill thee and love thee after.

This is a sentiment characteristic of, and fit only to be uttered by, a Moor. Shakespeare has thus formed his characters with the most perfect truth and coherence. Nor was this enough. In addition, he possessed a wonderful faculty of compressing his own spirit into these images. *Such an intuitive comprehension of things and such a faculty, must unite to produce a Shakespeare.....*

Shakespeare differs essentially from all other writers. Him we may profess rather to feel than to understand; and it is safer to say, on many occasions, that **we are possessed by him, than that we possess him**. And no wonder;—He scatters the seeds of things, the principles of character and action, with so cunning a hand, yet with so careless an air; and master of our feelings, he submits himself so little to our judgment that everything seems superior.....We are rapt in ignorant admiration, and claim no kindred with his abilities.

We see his Characters act from the mingled motives of passion, reason, interest, habit, and complexion, in all their proportions, when they are supposed to know it not themselves; and we are made to acknowledge that their actions and sentiments are, from those motives, the

necessary result. He at once blends and distinguishes everything; to him, everything is complicated, everything is plain.....It is really astonishing that a mere human being, a part of humanity only, should so perfectly comprehend the whole. A sceptre or a straw are in his hands of equal efficacy; he needs no selection, he converts everything into excellence; nothing is too great, nothing is too base. Action produces one mode of excellence and inaction another. The Chronicle, the Novel, or the Ballad; the king, or the beggar; the hero, the madman, the sot, or the fool, it is all one, nothing is worse, nothing is better.....How the rooted prejudices of the child spring up to confound the man! *The Weird sisters* rise, and order is extinguished. The laws of nature give way and leave nothing in our minds but wildness and horror. No pause is allowed us for reflection: *Horrid sentiment, furious guilt and compunction, air-drawn daggers, murders, ghosts, and enchantments, shake and possess us wholly*. In the meantime the process is completed. *Macbeth changes under our eye, the milk of human kindness is converted to gall; he has supped full of horrors, and his May of life is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf*, whilst we, the fools of amazement, are insensible to the shifting of place and the lapse of time, and till the curtain drops, never once wake to the truth of things, or recognize the law of existence.

(10) William Hazlitt :—(1817-1820)

The striking peculiarity of *Shakespeare's mind* was *its generic quality, its power of communication with all other minds*,—so that it contained a universe of thought and feeling within itself, and had no one peculiar bias or exclusive excellence more than another. He was just like any other man (individually), and yet he was like all other men (collectively). He was the least of an egotist that it was possible to be. He was nothing in himself, but he was all that others were, or could become. He not only had in himself the genius of every faculty and feeling, but he could follow them by anticipation, intuitively into all their conceivable ramifications, through every change of fortune, or conflict of passion, or turn of thought. *He had a mind, reflecting ages past and present*, and all the people that ever lived, are there. There was no respect of persons with him. His genius *shone equally on the evil and on the good*, on the wise and the foolish, the monarch and the beggar. 'All corners of the earth, kings, queens, and states, maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave' are hardly hid from his searching glance. He was like the genius of humanity, *changing places with all of us at pleasure*, and playing with our purposes as with his own. He turned the globe round for his amusement, and surveyed the generations of men and the individuals as they passed, *with their different concerns, passions, follies, vices, virtues, actions, and motives*,—as well those that they know, as those which they did not know, or acknowledge to themselves.

The dreams of childhood, the ravings of despair, were *the toys of his fancy*. Airy beings waited at his call and came at his bidding... He had only to think of any thing in order to become that thing, with all the circumstances belonging to it. When he conceived of a

character, whether real or imaginary, he not only *entered into all its thoughts and feelings* but seemed, instantly and as if by touching a secret spring, to be surrounded with all the same objects, 'subject to the same skyey influences,' the same local, outward, and unforeseen accidents as would occur in reality. Thus the character of Caliban not only stands before us with a language and manners of its own, but the scenery and situation of the enchanted island he inhabits, the traditions of the place, its strange noises, its hidden recesses, 'his frequent haunts and ancient neighbourhood,' are given with a miraculous truth of nature, and with all the familiarity of an old recollection. The whole 'coheres together' in time, place, and circumstance.

A word, an epithet, paints a whole scene, or throws us back whole years in the history of the person represented. For example when Prospero describes himself as left alone in the boat with his daughter, the epithet which he applies to her, 'Me and thy *crying* self,' flings the imagination instantly back from the grown woman to the helpless condition of infancy. It places the first and most trying scene of his misfortunes before us, with all that he must have suffered in the interval. How well *the silent anguish of Macduff* is conveyed to the reader, by the friendly expostulation of Malcolm,—'What, man, ne'er pull your hat upon your blows'

The passion, in the hands of Shakespeare, is of the same nature as his delineation of character. It is not some one habitual feeling or sentiment preying upon itself, growing out of itself, and moulding everything to itself, but *it is passion modified by passion, by all the other feelings* to which the individual is liable, and to which others are liable with him, subject to all the fluctuations of caprice and accident, *calling into play all the resources of the understanding and all the energies of the will*, irritated by obstacles or yielding to them; rising from small beginnings to its utmost height, now drunk with hope, now stung to madness, now sunk in despair, now blown to air with a breath, now raging like a torrent. *..The passions are in a state of projection* Years are melted down to moments, and every instant teems with fate. We know the results, we see the process. Thus, after *Iago has been boasting to himself* of the effect of his poisonous suggestions on the mind of Othello, 'which, with a little act upon the blood, will work like mines of sulphur,' he adds —

Look, where he comes! Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the East,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday

Othello enters at this moment, like the crested serpent, crowned with his wrongs and raging for revenge! The whole depends upon the turn of a thought. A word, a look, blows the spark of jealousy into a flame, and the explosion is immediate and terrible as a volcano.

The dialogues in *Lear*, in *Macbeth*, that between Brutus and Cassius, and nearly all those in Shakespeare, where the interest is wrought up to its highest pitch, *afford examples of this dramatic fluctuation of*

passion. . In Shakespeare, **the passion is like the sea**, agitated this way and that, and loud-lashed by furious storms; while in the still pauses of the blast, we distinguish only the cries of despair, or the silence of death ! When **Richard II** calls for the looking-glass to contemplate his faded majesty in it, and bursts into that affecting exclamation,—‘Oh that I were a mockery-king of snow, to melt away before the sun of Bolingbroke!’—we have here the utmost force of human passion, combined with the ideas of regal splendour and fallen power.

Shakespeare's imagination is of the same plastic kind as his conception of character or passion. ‘It glances from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven’ Its movement is rapid and devious It unites the most opposite extremes; or, as Puck says, in boasting of his own feats, ‘puts a griddle round about the earth in forty minutes.’ . **The felicity of his thoughts and images** is equal to their force The likeness is made more dazzling by their novelty. They startle and take the Fancy prisoner in the same instant I will mention one or two which are very striking, and not much known, out of *Trilus* and *Cressida*. **Ulysses, urging Achilles** to shew himself in the field, says—

No man is the lord of any thing,
Till he communicate his parts to others:
Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
Till he behold them formed in the *applause*,
Where they're extended, which like an arch reverberates
The voice again, or, like a gate of steel
Fronting the sun, receives and renders back
Its figure and its heat.

Shakespeare's language and versification are like the rest of him. **He has a magic power over words** they come winged at his bidding and seem to know their places They are struck out at a heat, on the spur of the occasion, and have all the truth and vividness which arise from an actual impression of the objects His epithets and single phrases are like sparkles, thrown off from an imagination fired by the whirling rapidity of its own motion **His language is hieroglyphical It translates thoughts into visible images** It abounds in sudden transitions and elliptical expressions This is the source of his mixed metaphors, which are only abbreviated forms of speech . . In Shakespeare, any other word but the true one, is sure to be wrong. If anybody, for instance, could not recollect the words of the following description,—

Light thickens,
And the crow makes wing to the rooky wood,

he would be greatly at a loss to substitute others for them equally expressive of the feeling. These remarks, however, are strictly applicable only to **the impassioned parts** of Shakespeare's language, which *flowed from the warmth and originality of his imagination*, and were his own. The language used *for prose conversation* and ordinary business is sometimes technical, and involved in the affectation of the time.

The poet of nature is one who, from the elements of beauty, of power, and of passion in his own breast, sympathises with whatever is beautiful, and grand, and impassioned in nature, in its simple majesty, in its immediate appeal to the senses, to the thoughts and hearts of all men—so that, the poet of nature, by the truth, and depth, and harmony of his mind, may be said to hold communion with the very soul of nature, to be identified with and to foreknow and to record the feelings of all men at all times and places, as they are liable to the same impressions, and to exert the same power over the minds of his readers that nature does. He sees things in their eternal beauty, for he sees them as they are, he feels them in their universal interest, for he feels them as they affect the first principles of his and our common nature. Such was Homer, such was Shakespeare whose works will last as long as nature; because they are a copy of the indestructible forms and everlasting impulses of nature, welling out from the bosom as from a perennial spring, or stamped upon the senses by the hand of their maker. The power of the imagination in them, is the representative power of all nature. It has its centre in the human soul and makes the circuit of the universe.

(11) Francis Jeffrey :—(1817)

There is, in Shakespeare, that eternal recurrence to what is sweet or majestic in the simple aspects of nature—that indestructible love of flowers and odours, of dews and clear waters, of soft airs and sounds, of bright skies, and woodland solitudes, and moonlight bowers. These are the *material elements of Poetry*. His flowers are not tied up in garlands, nor his fruits crushed into baskets—but spring living from the soil, in all the dew and freshness of youth, while the graceful foliage in which they lurk, and the ample branches, the rough and vigorous stem, and the wide-spreading roots on which they depend, are present along with them, and share, in their places, the equal care of their Creator.

What other poet has put all the charm of a Moonlight landscape into a single line?—and that by an image so true to nature, and so simple as to seem obvious to the most common observation—

How sweet the Moonlight *sleeps* upon this bank!

Where shall we find sweet sounds and odours so luxuriously blended and illustrated, as in these few words of sweetness and melody, where the author says of *soft music*—

O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet South
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour!

We need not refer to many passages in all other plays—as illustrating this love of nature and natural beauty of which we have been speaking—the power it had over the poet, and the power it imparted to him. Who else would have thought, *on the very threshold of treason and midnight murder*, of bringing in so sweet and rural an image as this, at the portal of that blood-stained castle of Macbeth?

This guest of summer,—
The temple-haunting martlet,—does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells woefully here.

Nor is this brought in for the sake of elaborate contrast between the peaceful innocence of the exterior, and the guilt and horrors that are to be enacted within. There is no hint of any such suggestion—but it is set down from the pure love of nature and reality—because the kindled mind of the poet brought the whole scene before his eyes, and he painted all that he saw in his vision. The same taste predominates in that emphatic exhortation to evil, where Lady Macbeth says,

Look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under it.

And yet all these are so far from being unnatural, that they are no sooner put where they are, than we feel at once their beauty and their effect. We acknowledge our obligations to that exuberant genius which alone could thus throw out graces and attractions where there seemed to be neither room nor call for them. In the same spirit of prodigality, he puts this rapturous and passionate exaltation of the beauty of Imogen, into the mouth of one who is not even a lover,—

It is her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus! The flame o the taper
Bows towards her, and would under-peek her lids
To see th' enclosed lights, now canopied
Under the windows, white and azure, laced
With blue of Heaven's own tinct!

(12) Thomas De Quincey —(1838)

O mighty Poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art, but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers, like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder. These are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert

It may be affirmed of Shakspeare that he is among the modern luxuries of life; that life, in fact, is a new thing, and one more to be coveted, since Shakspeare has extended the domains of human consciousness, and pushed its dark frontiers into regions not so much as dimly descried or even suspected before his time, far less illuminated (as now they are) by beauty and tropical luxuriance of life. For instance, the possible beauty of the female character had not been seen, as in a dream, before Shakspeare called into perfect life the radiant shapes of Desdemona, of Imogen, of Hermione, Perdita, of Ophelia, Miranda, and many others. The Una of Spenser, earlier by ten or fifteen years than most of these, was an idealised portrait of female innocence and virgin purity, but too shadowy and unreal for a dramatic reality. Nor do we find it in the Grecian classics... The Antigone and the Electra of the tragic poets are the two leading female characters that classical antiquity offers to our respect, but assuredly not to our impassioned love, as disciplined and exalted in the school of Shakspeare. They challenge our admiration, severe and even stern, as impersonations of filial duty, cleaving to the steps of a desolate and afflicted old man; or of sisterly affection, maintaining the rights of a brother under circumstances of peril,

of desertion and consequently of perfect self-reliance. Iphigenia, again, is a fine statuesque model of *heroic fortitude*, and of one whose young heart, even in the very agonies of the cruel immolation, refused to forget her own high descent. **These are fine marble groups,** but they are **not the warm breathing realities of Shakespeare**, there is 'no speculation' in their cold marble eyes, the breath of life is not in their nostrils; the fine pulses of womanly sensibilities are not throbbing in their bosoms. And, besides this immeasurable difference between the cold moony reflexes of life as exhibited by the power of Grecian art, and the true sunny life of Shakespeare, it must be observed that **the Antigones, and etc**, of the antique world, **put forward but one single trait of character**, like the aloe with its single blossom this solitary feature is presented to us as an abstraction, and as an insulated quality; *whereas in Shakespeare all is presented in the concrete embodied, and embedded as by the force of a creative nature, in the complex system of a human life*, a life in which all the elements move and play simultaneously, acting and re-acting each upon the other,—nay, even acting by each other and through each other. In Shakespeare's characters is felt for ever *a real organic life*, where each is for the whole and in the whole, and where the whole is for each and in each. They only are real incarnations.

The Greek poets could not exhibit any approximations to female character, without violating the truth of Grecian life and shocking the feelings of the audience. The drama, with the Greeks as with us, though much less than with us, was a picture of human life; and that which could not occur in life could not wisely be exhibited on the stage. Now, in ancient Greece, *women were secluded from the society of men*. Thus barred from all open social intercourse, *women could not develop or express any character by word or action*. Even to have a character, violated, to a Grecian mind, the ideal portrait of feminine excellence. Hence the subordinate part which women play upon the Greek stage in all but some half-dozen cases. Hence, also, followed the dearth of female characters in the Grecian drama. *If any appeared, it was only during some great convulsion or tragical catastrophe*. This, for a moment (like an earthquake in a nunnery), would set at liberty even the timid, fluttering Grecian women, those doves of the dove-cot, and would call some of them into action. But which? Precisely those of energetic and masculine minds; the timid and feminine would but shrink the more from public gaze and from tumult So that not only were female characters few, but moreover, of these few, *the majority were but repetitions of masculine qualities in female persons*. And hence it arose, that not woman as she differed from man, but woman as she resembled man,—woman, in short, seen under circumstances so dreadful as to abolish the effect of sexual distinction,—such was the woman of the Greek tragedy.

Hence generally arose for Shakespeare the wider field and the more astonishing by its perfect novelty, when he first introduced female characters, that had **the appropriate beauty of female nature**; woman no longer grand, terrific, and repulsive, but woman 'after her kind,' the other hemisphere of the dramatic world; woman running

through the vast gamut of womanly loveliness; woman as emancipated, exalted, ennobled, under a new law of morality; woman the sister and co-equal of man, no longer his slave, his prisoner, and sometimes his rebel.....The Roman Stage was put out, as by an extinguisher, by the cruel amphitheatre, just as a candle is made pale and ridiculous by daylight. Those who were fresh from the real murders of the bloody amphitheatre regarded with contempt the mimic murders of the stage. Stimulation too coarse and too intense had its usual effect in making the sensibilities callous...

Then, again, the purpose and the intention of the Grecian stage was not primarily to develop human character whether, in men or in women; human fates were its object; great tragic situations under the mighty control of a vast cloudy destiny, dimly described at intervals, and brooding over human life by mysterious agencies and for mysterious ends. Man, no longer the representative of an august will,—man, the passion-puppet of fate, could not with any effect display what we call a character, emanating originally from the will, and expressing its determinations moving under the large variety of human impulses. In Shakespeare, the will is the central pivot of character and this was obliterated, thwarted, cancelled, by the 'dark fatalism which brooded over the Grecian stage. That explanation will sufficiently clear up the reason why marked or complex variety of character was slighted by the great principles of the Greek tragedy.

History, as the representative of actual life, of real man, gives us powerful delineations of character in its chief agents, that is, in men and therefore it is that Shakespeare, the absolute creator of female character, was but the mightiest of all painters with regard to male character. In the great world, therefore, of woman, Shakespeare as the interpreter of the shifting phases and the lunar varieties of that mighty changeable planet, that lovely satellite of man, Shakespeare stands not the first only, not the original only, but is yet the sole authentic oracle of truth.

(1) Woman,—or the beauty of the female mind,—this is one great field of his power. (2) The supernatural world, the world of apparitions, that is another. For reasons which it would be easy to give, reasons emanating from the gross mythology of the ancients, no Grecian, no Roman, could have conceived a ghost. That shadowy conception, the protesting apparition, the awful projection of the human conscience, belongs to Shakespeare's mind. In summoning back to earth Old Hamlet's Ghost, 'the majesty of buried Denmark', how like an awful necromancer does Shakespeare appear! All the pomps and grandeurs which religion, which the grave, which the popular superstition had gathered about the subject of apparitions, are here converted to his purpose, and bend to one awful effect.....

Take, again, the ghost of Banquo. How shadowy, how unreal, yet how real! He exists only for Macbeth; the guests do not see him; yet how solemn, how real, how heart-searching he is! In the Tempest, again, we have Ariel in antithesis to Caliban. In the Midsummer-Night's Dream, Oberon, and Titania, and Puck, remind us of the traditional fairies of the moon-lit forests. The witches in

Macbeth enchanting and disenchanting us, are alike portentous. **Shakespeare employs them in high tragedy**, and yet relying on his own supreme power to disenchant as well as to enchant, to create and to uncreate, he mixes these women and their dark machineries with the power of armies, with the agencies of kings, and the fortunes of martial kingdoms. Such was the sovereignty of this poet, so mighty its compass !

A third fund of Shakespeare's peculiar power lies in **his teeming fertility of fine thoughts and sentiments**. From his works alone might be gathered a golden bead-roll of thoughts, the deepest, subtlest, most pathetic, and yet most catholic and universally intelligible ; the most characteristic, also, and appropriate to the particular person, the situation, and the case ; yet, at the same time, applicable to the circumstances of every human being, under all the accidents of life, and all vicissitudes of fortune.

Fourthly, we notice **his mastery in the structure of his dialogue**. Now, in Shakspeare, who first set an example of that most important innovation, in all his impassioned dialogues, each reply or rejoinder seems the mere rebound of the previous speech. Every form of natural interruption, breaking through the restraints of ceremony under the impulses of tempestuous passion ; every form of hasty interrogative, ardent reiteration when a question has been evaded ; every form of scornful repetition of the hostile words ; every impatient continuation of the hostile statement : in short, **all modes and formulæ by which anger, hurry, fretfulness, scorn, impatience, or excitement** under any movement whatever, can disturb or modify or dislocate the formal bookish style of commencement,—these are as rife in Shakespeare's dialogue as in life itself ; and how much vivacity, how profound a versimilitude, they add to the scenic effect as an imitation of human passion and real life, we need not say. A volume might be written, illustrating the vast varieties of Shakspeare's art and power in this one field of improvement.

(15) **Dr. Samuel Johnson, (1765) :—**

He had looked with great attention on the scenes of Nature. But his chief skill was in human Actions, Passions, and Habits ; he was therefore delighted with such tales as afforded numerous incidents, and exhibited many characters in many changes of situation. These characters are so copiously diversified, and some of them so justly pursued, that **his works may be considered as a Map of Life**, a faithful miniature of human transactions, and he that has read Shakespeare with Attention, will perhaps find little new in the crowded world.

Among his other excellencies it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that *his Heroes are Men* ; that the Love and Hatred, the Hopes and Fears of his Chief Personages are such as are common to other human Beings ; and that they are not like those which later times have exhibited, peculiar to phantoms that strut upon the stage. Shakespeare's excellence lies not in the fiction of a tale but in the representation of Life ; and his reputation

is therefore safe till human nature shall be changed.....The poet holds up to his readers *a faithful mirror of manners and of life*. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world, by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers, or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions, they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons *act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and by which the whole system of life is continued in motion*. In the writings of other poets, a character is too often an individual, in those of Shakespeare, it is commonly a species.

It is from this wide extension of design that **so much instruction is derived**. It is this which fills the plays of Shakespeare with *practical axioms and domestic wisdom*. It was said of Euripides that every verse was a precept, and it may be said of Shakespeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and economic prudence.....

Other dramatists can only gain attention, by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf: and he that should form his expectations of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. *Shakespeare has no heroes, his scenes are occupied only by men* This therefore is the praise of Shakespeare that his drama is the mirror of life; that he (the Reader), who has mazed his imagination in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him may here be cured of his delirious ecstasies by reading human sentiments in human language... ..For, Shakespeare always makes Nature predominate over Accident (of birth, riches, country, etc.) And if he preserves the essential character, he is not very careful of distinctions—super-induced and adventitious. History requires Romans or kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all dispositions and wanting a buffoon, he went into the senate-house for that which the senate-house would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to show an usurper and a murderer not only odious but despicable; he therefore added drunkenness to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. A true poet overlooks the casual distinction of country and condition as a painter, satisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

Shakespeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and sorrow not only in one mind but in one composition. Almost all his plays are divided between serious and ludicrous characters, and in the successive evolutions of the design, sometimes produce seriousness and sorrow, and sometimes levity and laughter. That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticism will be readily allowed, but there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature.

The end of writing is to instruct ; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing. The mingled drama conveys all the instruction of tragedy or comedy, because it includes both in its alterations of exhibition, and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life. Through all these denominations of the drama (History, Comedy and Tragedy), Shakespeare's mode of composition is the same,—*interchange of seriousness and merriment* by which the mind is softened at one time and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpose, whether to gladden or depress, or to conduct the story, without vehemence of emotion, through tracts of easy and familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his purpose. As he commands us, we laugh, or mourn, or sit silent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference...

The force of his comic scenes has suffered little or no diminution from the changes made by a century and a half, in manners or in words. As his personages act upon principles arising from genuine passion (which is) *very little modified by particular forms*, their pleasures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places. They are natural and therefore durable ; the *adventitious peculiarities of personal habits*, are only superficial dyes, bright and pleasing for a little while, yet soon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former lustre. But the discriminations of true passion (different passions) are the colours of nature. They pervade the whole mass, and can only perish with the body that exhibits them The accidental compositions of heterogeneous modes (the chance-minglings of different forms) are dissolved by the chance which combined them, but the uniform simplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increase, nor suffers decay. The sand heaped by one flood is scattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The stream of time, which is continually washing the dissoluble fabrics of other poets, passes without injury by the adamant of Shakespeare.....

It has been much disputed, whether Shakespeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of scholastic education, the precepts of critical science, and the examples of ancient authors..... There is however proof enough that *he was a very diligent reader*..... But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the English stage in a state of the utmost rudeness..... Neither character nor dialogue were yet understood. Shakespeare may be truly said to have introduced them both amongst us, and in some of his happier scenes to have carried them both to the utmost height..... However favoured by nature, he could impart only what he had learned ; and as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, *grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy as he was himself more amply instructed.*

Speculation (science) had not yet attempted to analyse the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or sound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those enquiries which, from the time that human

nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtlety, were yet unattempted. *The tales with which the infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders,—(giants, dragons, and enchantments),—rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleanings his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its business and amusements.....Shakespeare, whether life or nature be his subject, shows plainly, that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.*

(14) Thomas Carlyle, (1840):—

Shakespeare's Vision, Insight, Portrait-painting. I think the best judgment, not of this country only, but of Europe at large, is slowly pointing to the conclusion, that Shakespeare is the chief of all Poets hitherto; the greatest intellect who, in our recorded world, has left record of himself in the way of Literature. On the whole, I know not such a power of vision, such a faculty of thought, (if we take all the characters of it) in any other man.....Or again, it is in what I call Portrait-painting, delineating of men and things, especially of men, that Shakespeare is great. All the greatness of the man comes out decisively here.....The word that will describe the thing, follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing, the seeing eye, (the clear understanding of the thing).

Nature's truthful Mirror: And, is not Shakespeare's morality, his valour, his candour, tolerance, truthfulness; his whole victorious strength and greatness which can triumph over such obstructions, visible there too? Great as the world! No twisted, poor, convex-concave mirror, reflecting all objects with its own convexities and concavities; a perfectly level mirror.....It is truly a lordly spectacle how this great soul takes in all kinds of men and objects, a Falstaff, and Othello, a Juliet, a Coriolanus; sets them all forth to us in their round completeness; loving, just, the equal brother of all.....

His Intellect was a Gift of Nature: And the faculty which enables him to discern the inner heart or harmony of things is not the result of habits or accidents, but the gift of Nature herself.....It is the Superiority of his Intellect (under which faculty I include all others). We talk of faculties, as if they were distinct things, separable; as if a man had intellect, imagination, fancy etc., (separately), as he has hands, feet and arms. That is a capital error. Then again, we hear of a man's 'intellectual nature,' and of his 'moral nature,' as if these again were divisible and existed apart. Necessities of language do perhaps prescribe such forms of utterance; we must speak, I am aware, in that way if we are to speak at all. But words ought not to harden into things for us. It seems to me, our apprehension of this matter is, for most part, radically falsified thereby. We ought to know withal, and to keep

for ever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but names; that man's spiritual (psychological) nature, the vital Force which dwells in him, is essentially one and indivisible; that what we call imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the same Power of Insight, all indissolubly connected with each other.....

Knowledge, based on Love: To know a thing, to acquire what we call knowledge, a man must first love the thing, sympathise with it; that is, be virtuously related to it. If he have not the justice to put down his own selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous truth at every turn, how shall he know? His virtues, all of them, will be recorded in his knowledge. Nature with her truth, remains to the bad, to the selfish and the pusillanimous, forever a sealed book; what such can know of Nature is mean, superficial, small; for the uses of the day merely.

Fox-Morality in Men,—classes and races: But does not the very Fox know something of Nature? Exactly so; it knows where the geese lodge! The human Reynard, very frequent everywhere in the world, what more does he know but this and the like of this? Nay, if the Fox had not a certain vulpine morality, he could not even know where the geese were, or get at the geese! If he spent his time in splenetic reflections on his own misery, his ill-usage by Nature, by Fortune, by other Foxes, and so forth; and if he had not courage, promptitude, practicality, and other suitable vulpine gifts and graces, he would catch no geese. We may say of the Fox too, that his morality and insight are of the same dimensions; different faces of the same internal unity of vulpine life! These things are worth stating.

His Tears and Laughs: Doubt it not, he had his own sorrows; those sonnets of his will even testify expressly in what deep waters he had waded, and swum struggling for his life.....How could a man delineate a Hamlet, a Coriolanus, a Macbeth, so many suffering heroic hearts, if his own heroic heart had never suffered?—And now, in contrast with all this, observe his mirthfulness, his genuine overflowing love of laughter! You would say, in no point does he exaggerate but only in laughter.....And then, if not always the finest, it is always a genial laughter. *Not at mere weakness, at misery or poverty; never.* No man who can laugh, what we call laughter, will laugh at these things. It is some poor character only, desiring to laugh, and have the credit of wit, that does so. *Laughter means sympathy.*

Once a poor Peasant, now a real King. He cannot be exchanged for the whole of our Indian Empire: Well; this is our poor Warwickshire Peasant who rose to be a Manager of a Playhouse.... We did not account him a god, like Odin, while he dwelt with us.... But consider what this Shakespeare has now actually become among us.....Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give up your Indian Empire or your Shakespeare, you English! Really, it were a grave question. Official persons would answer doubtless in official language. But we, for our part too, should not we be forced to

answer:—Indian Empire, or no Indian Empire, we cannot do without Shakespeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate, some day. But this Shakespeare does not go, he lasts forever with us; we cannot give up our Shakespeare!

Shakespeare should serve as a binding, uniting force: England, this Island of ours, before long, will hold but a small fraction of the English. In America, in New Holland, east and west to the very Antipodes, there will be a Saxondom, (more appropriately, English-Speaking Humandom) covering great spaces of the Globe. And now, what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one Nation (one Society), so that they do not fall out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse, helping one another? This is justly regarded as the greatest practical problem—the thing all manner of sovereignties and governments are here to accomplish. What is it that will accomplish this? Acts of Parliament, administrative Prime-ministers, cannot. America is parted from us, so far as Parliament could part it.....But this King Shakespeare, does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs?

(15) John Ruskin, (1843): On Shakespeare's Grasp of Human Nature,—

Shakespeare seems to have been sent essentially to take *universal and equal grasp of human nature*; and to have been removed, therefore, from all influences which could in the least warp or bias his thoughts. It was necessary that he should lean no way; *that he should contemplate, with absolute equality of judgment, the life of the court, cloister, and tavern*, and be able to sympathize so completely with all creatures as to deprive himself, together with his personal identity, even of his conscience, as he casts himself into their hearts (a) He must be able to *enter into the soul of Falstaff or Shylock* with no more sense of contempt or horror than Falstaff or Shylock themselves feel for or in themselves, otherwise, his own conscience and indignation would make him unjust to them,— he would turn aside from something, miss some good, or overlook some essential palliation. (b) *He must be utterly without anger, utterly without purpose*; for, if a man has any serious purpose in life, that which runs counter to it, or is foreign to it, it will be looked at frowningly or carelessly by him.....Not, for him, the founding of institutions, the preaching of doctrines, or the repression of abuses. Neither he, nor the sun, did on any morning that they rose together, receive charge from their Maker concerning such things. They were both of them to shine on the evil and good; both to behold unoffendedly all that was upon the earth, to burn unappalled upon the spears of kings, and undisdaining, upon the reeds of the river.....

(16) Goethe, the great German,—Poet, Dramatist, Statesman, Scientist—says of Shakespeare's power of truthful Characterization (1774-75),—

His characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal; they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is all visible.

- (17) Victor Hugo, a French savant, poet and novelist, has these terse and brilliant observations on Shakespeare ; (1864):

The poet is necessarily at once **poet, historian, and philosopher**. Herodotus and Thales are included in Homer. Shakespeare, likewise, is this triple man. He is besides, a painter, a painter upon a colossal scale. The poet in reality does more than relate, he exhibits. Poets have in them a receiver and a reflector. Hence issue *those grand luminous spectres from their brain*. These phantoms have life. To have an existence as real as that of Achilles would be the ambition of Alexander. Shakespeare has tragedy, comedy, fairy scenes, hymn, farce, deep divine laughter, terror and horror,—in one word, the drama. He touches the two poles, belongs to Olympus and to the itinerant show. No possibility escapes him. *When he shows truth, he shows it naked. His cruelty is pathetic*. He shows you a mother, Constance, the mother of Arthur, and when he has brought you to such a point of tenderness that your heart is as her heart, he kills the child.....No respite to anguish.....Shakespeare flows towards the terrible. **Shakespeare, Æschylus, Dante, are the great streams of human emotion, pouring**, from the depth of their cavern, *the urn of tears*..... The poet is only limited by his aim, he considers nothing but the idea to be worked out. He recognizes no sovereignty, no necessity, save the idea.

Shakespeare in **philosophy**, as in fancy, goes at times deeper than Homer. Beyond Priam there is Lear. to weep at Ingratitude is worse than to weep at Death. *Homer meets envy and creates Thersites*, a deformed, scurrilous, Grecian Chief. *Shakespeare creates Richard III.* Envy is exposed in its nakedness all the more strongly for being clothed in purple. Envy on the throne,—what more striking? *Deformity in the person of the tyrant* is not enough for this philosopher. He must have it also in the shape of the valet, and he creates Falstaff Why crown this monster, John? Why kill that child, Arthur? Why have Joan of Arc burned? Why Monk, triumphant? Why Louis XV, happy? Why Louis XVI, punished?... *Comedy bursts forth in the midst of tears*; the sob rises out of laughter; figures mingle and clash; massive forms, as of beasts, pass clumsily spectres, souls, dragon-flies of the shadow, flies of the twilight, flutter among all those black reeds that we call passions and events. At one pole Lady Macbeth, at the other Titania: a colossal thought, and an immense caprice... .*

Few poets surpass him in this **psychical research**. *Many of the strangest peculiarities of the human mind are indicated by him*... . To all this mental prodigality,—analysis, synthesis, creation in flesh and bone, reverie, fancy, science, metaphysics,—add history. Here the history of historians, there the history of the tale. This history contains specimens of everything,—of the traitor, from Macbeth, the assassin of his guest, up to Coriolanus, the assassin of his country; of the despot, from the tyrant brain, Cæsar, to the tyrant belly, Henry VIII; of the carnivore, from the lion down to the usurer, Shylock, the well-bitten Jew. Again, on the desert heath, there appear in the twilight, three black shapes promising crowns to murderers.....Inordinate force, exquisite charm, epic ferocity; pity, creative faculty, gaiety (thaf lofty gaiety unintelligible to narrow

understandings), sarcasm (the cutting lash for the wicked), sidereal grandeur, microscopic tenuity, a universe of poetry,—all are there by turns!

A Reply to some critics. ‘*Totus in antithesi*’, says (critical) Jonathan Forbes. Yes, Shakespeare is all in antithesis. Certainly, he is like creation. What is creation? Good and evil, joy and sorrow, man and woman, roar and song, dove and vulture, bee and drone, mountain and valley, love and hate, the medal and its reverse, beauty and ugliness, star and swine, high and low. Nature is the eternal biform. *The antithesis of Shakespeare is the universal antithesis*, present always and everywhere; it is the ubiquity of opposites;—life and death, cold and heat, just and unjust, angel and demon, heaven and earth, flower and weed, melody and noise, spirit and flesh, self and not-self, objective and subjective, matter and force ... Before removing this antithesis from Art, we should begin by removing it from Nature.

‘But he is not *Moderate, Sober, and Discreet*’, say others. What is this—a recommendation for a domestic or a slave? No. It is an eulogy upon a writer. A certain school called ‘serious’ seems to think that the only question should be to preserve literature from indigestion. Formerly, the cry was ‘fecundity and power’; to-day it is ‘bailey-gin!’ But you are in *resplendent garden of the Muses*, where those divine blossoms of the mind (that the Greeks call ‘tropes’) blow in riot and luxuriance on every branch; everywhere the ideal image, everywhere the thought-flower, everywhere fruits, metaphors, golden apples, perfumes, colour, rays, strophes, wonders.. *The beautiful intoxicates, the noble inebriates, the ideal causes giddiness....* When you have walked among the stars, you are capable of refusing an ‘under prefecture’; you are no longer in your right mind. You will not even salute the Lord Incitatus, consul and horse.....Therefore, on to sobriety, decorum, respect for authority, irreproachable toilet! No poetry unless it is fashionably dressed. An uncombed savannah, a lion which does not pare its nails, an unregulated torrent, .. Oh! shocking. A Juvenal, spitting on the tyrant. Fie! ...Henceforth, the rose-bush is to be required to count its roses; the meadow to be requested not to be so prodigal of daisies; the spring to be commanded to calm itself. The nests are rather too prolific. Attention, groves! not so many warblers, if you please. The Milky Way will have the goodness to number its stars; there are a good many ... Stop the nightingales in your trees. These ugly fowl do nothing but bawl all night through .. If Polyhymnia goes by with her hair floating a little, what a scandal! Quick! they call the hair-dresser.... Thence, we have a *discipline in literature and art*. Fall into line,—right dress! Society must be saved in literature as well as politics. Every one knows that poetry is a frivolous insignificant thing, childishly occupied in seeking rhymes, barren, vain; consequently, away with this folly! *It behoves us to tie up the thinkers securely*. To the kennel with him! He is dangerous! What is a poet? For honour, nothing; for persecution, everything...

This race of writers requires repression. It is useful to have recourse to the secular arm. The means vary. From time to

time, a good banishment is expedient. *The list of exiled writers* opens with Æschylus, and does not close with Voltaire. Each century has its link in the chain. But there must be at least a pretext for exile, banishment, and proscription. Exile cannot be applied in all cases. It is rather unhappy. It is important to have a lighter weapon for everyday skirmishing. A *State criticism*, duly sworn and accredited, can render service. To organize the persecution of writers is not a bad thing. To entrap the pen by the pen is ingenious. Why not have *literary policemen*?... Therefore, to arms against this new generation! To arms against the modern spirit: *And down with Democracy, the daughter of Philosophy*!.....

Sobriety in poetry is poverty; *simplicity is grandeur*. To give to each thing the quantity of space which fits it, neither more nor less: this is simplicity. Simplicity is justice. The whole law of taste is in that. Each thing put in its own place and spoken with its own word... The higher criticism alone, which takes its starting point from enthusiasm, penetrates and comprehends these profound laws. Opulence, profusion, dazzling radiance, may be simplicity. The sun is simple. Simplicity being true, is artless. Artlessness is the countenance of truth. Shakespeare is simple in the grand manner; he is infatuated with it; but petty simplicity is unknown to him. The simplicity which is impotence, the simplicity which is short-minded, is a case for pathology. A hospital ticket suits it better than a ride on the hippogriff. I admit that the hump of Thersites is simple: but the pectoral muscles of Hercules are simple also. I prefer this simplicity to the other....

But then this Shakespeare respects nothing: he goes straight on, putting out of breath those who wish to follow him. He strides over proprieties; he overthrows Aristotle, *he spreads havoc among the Jesuits, the Methodists, the Purists, and the Puritans*; he puts Loyola to disorderly rout and upsets Wesley, he is valiant, bold, enterprising militant, direct. His inkstand smokes like a crater. Pen in hand, his brow blazing, he goes on, driven by the demon of genius. The stallion is over-demonstrative; there are jack-mules passing by, to whom this is displeasing. To be prolific is to be aggressive..... It infringes the rights of neuters. For nearly three centuries, Shakespeare, the poet, all brimming with virility, has been looked upon by sober critics with discontented air... Yet this does not hinder Shakespeare from thinking of you, spectator or reader! from preaching to you, from giving you advice, from being your friend, like the first good-natured La Fontaine you meet, and from rendering you small services.

Othello, Romeo, Iago, Macbeth, Shylock, Richard, Juliet, Titania,—men, women, witches, fairies, souls,—Shakespeare is *the grand distributor*; take, take, take, all of you! Do you want more? Here are Ariel, Parolles, Macduff, Prospero, Viola, Miranda, Caliban. More yet? Here are Jessica, Cordelia, Cressida, Portia, Brabantio, Polonius, Horatio, Mercutio, Imogen, Pandarus of Troy, Bottom, Theseus. *Ecce Deus*!..... He is never empty. In him is something of the fathomless. He fills up again, and spends himself; then recommences. He is *the spendthrift of genius*. He gives, scatters, squanders himself..... What is this vast intemperate song that he sings

through the centuries,—war-song, drinking-song, love-ditty,—which passes from King Lear to Queen Mab, and from Hamlet to Falstaff, heart-rending at times as a sob, grand as the *Iliad* ?.....

From time to time, *there comes to this globe one of these spirits* Their passage, as we have said, renews art, science, philosophy, or society. They fill a century, then disappear. Then it is not one century alone that their light illuminates, but humanity from the beginning to the end of time.....*The characteristic of men of genius of the first order is to produce,—each a peculiar model of man.* They all bestow on humanity its portrait,—some laughing, some weeping, others pensive; these last are the greatest. Plautus (Roman comedy writer) laughs, and gives to man *Amphitryon*; Rabelais (French humorist) laughs, and gives to man *Gargantua*; Cervantes (Spanish Wit) laughs, and gives to man *Don Quixote*; Beaumarchais (a French Comedian) laughs, and gives to men *Figaro* (a character who outwits everyone by his dexterity, cunning and intrigue), *Moliere* weeps, and gives to man *Alceste*, (counterpart of *Timon*, the misanthrope); Shakespeare dreams, and gives to man *Hamlet*, *Æschylus* meditates, and gives to man *Prometheus*. *The others are great, but Æschylus and Shakespeare are vast.* These portraits of humanity (left to humanity as a last farewell by those passing spirits, the poets) are rarely flattering, always exact, likenesses of profound resemblance Vice, or folly, or virtue, is extracted from the soul and stamped upon the visage The tear congealed, becomes a pearl; the smile petrified, at last appears a menace; wrinkles are the furrows of wisdom, certain frowns are tragic. This series of models of man is a permanent lesson for the generations each century adds in some figures.....

The man of *Æschylus* is *Prometheus*, and the man of Shakespeare is *Hamlet*. They are two marvellous Adams *Prometheus* is action, *Hamlet* is hesitation, doubt. In *Prometheus* the obstacle is exterior, in *Hamlet* it is interior.....Behold the mysterious confrontment of those two captives, *Prometheus* and *Hamlet*. Nothing can be more fiercely wild than *Prometheus* stretched in the *Caucasus*. It is gigantic tragedy The old punishment which our ancient laws of torture called 'extension'—this, *Prometheus* undergoes; only the rack is a mountain. What is his crime? He taught man the use of fire,—the use of reason, knowledge, art and science He taught the Right. To characterize Right as crime, and movement as rebellion, is the immemorial custom and skill of tyrants. *Prometheus* has done on *Olympus* what *Eve* did in *Eden*,—he has taken a little knowledge. *Jupiter*, identical indeed with *Jehovah*, punishes this temerity of having desired to live. *Prometheus* is the Right conquered. *Jupiter* has, as is always the case, consummated the usurpation of power by the punishment of Right *Olympus* claims the aid of *Caucasus*. *Prometheus* is fastened there by the brazen collar There is the Titan, fallen, prostrate, nailed down *Mercury*, everybody's friend, comes to give him counsel, the counsel of cowardice*Mercury*, the god Vice, serves *Jupiter*, the god Crime. These flunkies in evil are marked to this day by the veneration of the Thief for the Assassin There is something of that law in the arrival of the Diplomatist behind the Conqueror. The masterworks are immense in this,—that they are eternally present in the deeds of humanity *Prometheus*, on the

Caucasus, is Poland after 1772; France after 1815 the Revolution after Brumaire. Mercury speaks; Prometheus listens but little. Offers of amnesty miscarry when it is the victim alone who should have the right to grant pardon ...Meanwhile tears flow around him, the earth despairs, the liberator is enchained.....

But where does the Right dwell? In the inarticulate murmur of those wretched breaths mingled together,—uttering wonderful words, Future, Humanity, Liberty, Equality, Progress And the poet listens, and he hears He bends lower and lower, and he weeps.....And with a loud voice he demands a reckoning And he says, Here is the effect! And he says, Here is the Cause! Light is the remedy..... fire for the oppressors, dew for the oppressed, Ah! you deem that an evil? Well, we, for our part, approve it, It seems to us right that some one should speak when all are suffering. **The ignorant who enjoy, and the ignorant who suffer, have equal need of instruction.** The law of fraternity is derived from the law of labour. *The practice of killing one another has had its day; the hour has come for loving one another.* It is by promulgating these truths that the poet is good For that, he must be of the people, for that, he must be of the populace.....He must live the life in common with those exiles from joy who are called the poor—such is the first duty of poets. It is useful, it is necessary, that the breath of the people should traverse these all-powerful souls. The people have something to say to them. It is good that there should be in Euripides a flavour of the herb-dealers of Athens; and in Shakespeare, of the sailors of London

Sacrifice to 'the mob', O poet sacrifice to that unfortunate, disinherited, vanquished, vagabond, shoeless, famished, repudiated, despairing mob; sacrifice to it, if it must be and when it must be, thy repose, thy fortune, thy joy, thy country, thy liberty, thy life. The mob is the human race in misery The mob is the great victim of darkness...Alas! it suffers so much, and it knows nothing Correct it, warn it, instruct it, guide it, train it. Put it to the school of honesty Make it spell truth, show it the alphabet of reason, teach it to read virtue, probity, generosity, mercy Hold thy book wide open.....Be ever there in the form of light It is beautiful that Force should have Right for a master, that Progress should have Courage as a leader, that intelligence should have Charity as a sovereign, that Conscience should have Duty as a despot, that Civilization should have Liberty as a queen, and that the servant of Ignorance should be the Light

Memorable things have been done during the last eighty years. The pavement is cluttered with the rubbish of a vast demolition. What is done is but little compared with what remains to be done *To destroy is mere task-work*; the work of the artist is to build Progress demolishes with the left hand; it is with the right hand that it builds.....A great deal of useful destruction had, up to this hour, been accomplished; all the old cumbersome civilization is, thanks to our fathers, cleared away.....Now to build, to construct. To construct the people To construct it according to the laws of progress. To construct it by means of light. To work for the people,—this is the great and urgent need. And Shakespeare gives repeated hints of this building process.....

- (18) **Dr. G. G. Gervinus,** (1850),—One of the Pioneer German Critics, and Intelligent Admirers of Shakespeare,—on the Passions, Art and Morality—

Human nature is not merely presented by Shakespeare (as in the ancient drama) **in its typical characters**, it is also portrayed (in his poetical creations) **in distinct individualised forms**. We look within upon the inner life of the man in all its conditions, we gain a glimpse into the dealings of all classes and ranks, into all kinds of family and private life, into all phases of public history. We are introduced into **the life of the Roman Aristocracy, Republic, and Monarchy**; into the mythic heroic age of the first inhabitants of Gaul and Britain, into the adventurous world of the Romantic period of Chivalry and the Middle Ages, and upon the soil of English history both of mediæval and modern date. **Upon all these epochs, and upon all their manifold circumstances, the poet looks from a superior point of view, so exalted above prejudice and party, above people and age, and with such a soundness and certainty of judgment in matters of art, custom, politics, and religion, that he appears to belong to a latter and riper generation.** He displays, in all the general or special conditions of the inner and outer life, **a wisdom and a knowledge of human nature which constitutes him a teacher of unquestionable authority.** He has derived his views of morality so richly from his observation of the outer world, and he has so refined them by a richer inner life, that he deserves more than perhaps any other writer to be trustfully **chosen as a guide in our passage through the world.**

N. B. Prof. Furnivall, in his Introduction (1874) to Gervinus' Work, —Shakespeare Commentaries—says, "It is a disgrace to England, that even now, 258 years after Shakespeare's death, the study of him has been so narrow, and the criticism, however good, so devoted to the mere text and its illustration, and to studies of single plays, that **no book of an Englishman exists which deals in any worthy manner with Shakespeare as a whole, which tracks the rise and growth of his genius from the boyish romanticism or the sharp youngmanishness of his early plays, to the magnificence, the splendour, the divine intuition, which mark his ablest works.** The profound and generous Commentaries of Gervinus,—an honor to a German to have written, and a pleasure to an Englishman to read—is still the only book known to me that comes near the true treatment and the dignity of its subject, or that can be put into the hands of the student who wants to know the mind of Shakespeare....."

The truth of these words has been confirmed by all the best judges to whom I have spoken about Gervinus's Commentaries since. One of the ablest of these is my friend, **Professor J. R. Seeley** (author of *Ecce Homo* and of the *Expansion of England*). He had been a student of Shakespeare from his youth. He said, on returning the book to me, 'The play of *Cymbeline* had always puzzled me; and now for the first time, Gervinus has explained it. I could not have believed before, that any man could have taught me, at my time of life so much about one of Shakespeare's plays. It is all clear now.' In Germany, Gervinus' book still holds its ground as the best æsthetic work on our great poet, and is respected by all thoughtful men.

'To study earnestly and eagerly the works of such a man, rewards every trouble and demands every effort.....There is an old and excellent rule, that, **for self-culture, a little of the good should be read, but that little again and again.** In no case will the application of this rule be so richly rewarded as in the study of Shakespeare. For he is ever new, and he cannot satiate. Not only he may, but he must, be often read.....To draw nearer to him, demands honest industry earnest endeavour. Such is not only the experience of every single man but of the whole world..... And almost two centuries of this period had passed away before the men appeared **who first recognised Shakespeare's entire merit and capacity** . . . Why did this poet so long remain an enigma to the whole literary world and history? Why? Because he was an extraordinary man, *the ordinary alone is comprehended quickly, it is only the commonplace that is free from misconception* We only knew this when we translated him. From Wieland and Eschenburg to Schlegel and Voss, we had a number of translations, ever newly issued and ever newly read.....But we were chiefly indebted to the **translation of A. W. Schlegel**, which even Englishmen read with admiration. The archaisms are here eased, the rough words of the period gently modified, yet the whole character is faithfully maintained. The sensibility of the German nature, the flexibility of our language, and the taste and mind of the translator, procure for this work equally great and lasting honour. More than any other effort on behalf of the English poet, **this translation has made him our own.....**

The great zeal for Shakespeare, manifested in German literature, **reacted** (in the beginning of this century) **upon England.** When Nathan Drake in 1817 published his ample work upon Shakespeare and his times, **the idolatry of the poet** had passed already to his native land. An æsthetic study of the poet is little cared for by Drake A totally different treatment of the poet had been attempted by Coleridge even before Drake . . . in 1811—12. But it is only lately that in England, a new period of Shakespeare criticism has begun in which **no longer cavilling faultfinders, but enlightened admirers,** have purified and explained the works of the poet.....

But we ever return (when we seek a model explanation of Shakespeare's works) **to Goethe and his interpretation of Hamlet.** Upon this remarkable play, the most glaringly opposed opinions have centred; *the turning-point of the true appreciation of the poet was to issue from these conflicting views*. (1) **Voltaire** who had read this piece, in order to criticise and make use of it, saw in it only a heap of disconnected and confused scenes. **His verdict** deserves never to be forgotten, "Hamlet is mad in the second act, and his mistress is so in the third; the prince, feigning to kill a rat, kills the father of his mistress, and the heroine throws herself into the river. They bury her on the stage, the grave-diggers utter quodlibets worthy of them, holding skulls in their hands; Prince Hamlet replies to their disgusting follies with coarseness not less disgusting. During this time, one of the actors makes the conquest of Poland. Hamlet, his mother, and his step-father, drink together on the stage, they sing at table, they quarrel, they strike, and they kill." (2) Now arose **Goethe**, and this same alleged chaos suddenly appeared as an harmonious world

full of admirable order. He pointed out one single bond which linked together the apparently disconnected scenes and characters, one single thought, to which every action and every figure may be traced. Every inconsistency of character finds its explanation, every offending passage its justification, every apparently incidental part or action its necessity, every heterogeneous episode its connection with the whole.It was to be expected that the example of Goethe's explanation of Hamlet would not be lost. *What he did for the single piece, we wished to see carried out for the whole. To make this attempt is my present task.* Now that the way has been once indicated, it will be yet oftener done; the effort has been already made.....

Shakespeare's works should properly be explained only by representation For that, and for that alone, were they written. The separation of dramatic poetry from histrionic art through which both arts have suffered, was unknown in Shakespeare's time. **The main difficulty** to the understanding of his plays lies thus alone in this, **that we read them, but do not see them**, for, full as they are of poetic beauties, of psychological characteristics, of moral worldly wisdom, of references and allusions to the circumstances and persons of the time, they divert attention to the most different points and place a difficulty in the way of the comprehension and enjoyment of the whole. ***But when they are performed by actors who are equal to the poet**, a division of labour takes place, which, by the interposition of a second art, assists us to the easier enjoyment of the first. Actors who understand their parts relieve us of the trouble, we have in reading, of separating perhaps twenty different characters, and understanding them and their mutual relations.....Every historical work of Art reflects the mind of the narrator no less than the subject presented; and this only **acquires a living reality for the human mind**, when it has been received and newly fashioned by the creative power of human genius.....(From "Introduction" by Gervinus)

The points of view, from which this many-sided poet, his gift, his character and his art, may be studied are countless; endless is the material out of which the threads of such a universal examination may be spun.....And yet, concerning his **opinion**, in the course of three centuries, has so greatly changed, and even now **is so divided** among the English themselves. (1) **In Johnson's time**, the opinion was held that Shakespeare often did not know his own intention, and that he owed his greatest beauties to mere lucky hits. (2) In the present day, **Birch and Courtenay**, undeterred by the indication of deep contrivance in his dramas, deny all fixed plan in Shakespeare's works. They have solemnly **protested against the worship of his genius**, and thought it blasphemy in Coleridge to call him superhuman.....(a) *Tastelessness*, or want of the sense of beauty, (b) *irregularity*, or want of the spirit of arrangement, (c) *the realistic drawing* from nature in his works, or the want of artistic ideality, these were formerly and are still **the standing objections** urged against Shakespeare..... We will go over all these points (briefly).

First, as concerns **the poet's taste or sense of beauty**, we will not deny that we ourselves have found marks of a perverted and unculti-

vated taste in his indelicacies, in his laboured play upon words, and odd conceits, or in the cutting off of heads and putting out of eyes on the stage, or in his strange anachronisms; also in the number and style of metaphorical images which characterise Shakespeare's poetical conversations. One general remark in reference to these must precede all other explanations. These censures universally refer only to isolated scenes.... And though we have neither concealed nor excused error of this kind, yet, looking upon them as exceptions and trifles, we have upon principles not laid more stress upon them than was due with reference to so great a whole. **All beauty depends upon symmetry and proportion** An overgrowth, which sucks out the strength of a flowering plant and destroys its shape, may be in the oak the harmless sport of exuberance, and even an ornament to its form; bushes which would be a wilderness in a garden, may enhance the beauty of the grander scenes of nature.

Irregularity, when isolated and taken out of its place, will always be ugly, while in its proper connection it may add to the charm of variety. *Those good men of Polonius' School*, who cannot see beyond their beards, who never get beyond such particular details as 'that is a foolish figure;' 'that's an ill phrase, a vile phrase'; 'that is good, this too long;' such as these, Hamlet sends 'to the barber's with their beards' and their art-criticisms; they are out of place with such a poet as Shakespeare. ...If, for next century, we would **only see Shakespeare acted**, instead of reading him alone as we have hitherto done, perhaps all that appeared to us unsuitable would stand forth, if not as beauties of art, yet as truths of nature. For most of the **errors of taste**, in Shakespeare, have turned out to be striking touches of character; the æsthetic deformities imputed to Shakespeare's poetry **proved the moral deformities of certain of his characters**; and what had been denounced as fault was found to be an excellence.

Thus it is, almost everywhere, with those **obscenities and naive expressions**, with that forced wit and those conceits, and that enigmatical depth of speech and expression. In single instances among his early works, many disfigurements of this kind cannot perhaps be justified. But we must not suffer ourselves to be disgusted with the poet on this account any more than with Homer for the naive epithets at which the refined age smiles. To lay aside **the exterior garb of the time**, in speech and manners, is beyond any man's power. We know with what coarseness, not long before Shakespeare, the most **learned priests** entered into controversy, and the greatest man of the age exchanged writings with the English king! We know that **noble ladies** of those times far exceeded in indecency of language what the poet puts into the mouth of his boldest characters. We know that burlesque wit was then common property and **the general taste of society in popular literature**. We know that **those conceits were naturalised**, in the highest court circle and among the learned.....

It is, therefore, no wonder that in Shakespeare, we can collect a number of these **strange conceits**. It is rather a wonder that **he was the first to give a shock** to this affectation of poetical diction **by the use of a healthy popular language**. ...It was a wonder that Shakespeare was so soon able so far to rise above the indecencies of his

dramatic contemporaries and the bad taste of the Italian court of style; that in his works the mean and absurd is never inserted for its own sake; that, in his riper plays, the freedoms and follies of language are confined to the tongues and circumstances to which they are natural. It is only a certain class of women in whom he permits great freedom of speech, and **Johnson never said anything more untrue than that** "neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguishable from the clowns by any appearance of refined manners" **It is only a certain class of men who indulge in witticisms and puns** No indelicate expressions, no trifling witticisms, can be pointed out in Antonio and Posthumus, Brutus and Cassius, Coriolanus and Othello, or any of his earnest and active heroes. The witty among them condescend sometimes to the wanton conversations of their more daring friends; others are so inaccessible to it that even a third person dare not attempt it in their presence

The conceits, the obscurities, and extravagances of language are always in characteristic places. Where confused thoughts oppose, cross and preplex each other, *it is because the thinking powers of the speaker are themselves lame or dull*; where the meaning struggles for expression, it is because the speaker hovers over the abyss of mental excitement, in which the plummet of reason can find no firm ground. But where the verse is heavy and the figure grand, the sense will be weighty. And *rarely* is it that, as in the descriptive poems, *great words are wasted on small thoughts, deep thought on shallow subjects*, swelling figures on mean things, or that the harmony between matter and expression is injured **The choice, however, lies between taste and truth** Those who from a childish nicety would find fault with the truth of nature, the poet would have set to rights, as Bacon did **the fastidious persons who turned away from what was naked and ugly in natural sciences**, testifying that the sun of Art shines on the cloaca as well as the palace without being soiled by it; that what is worthy of existence may also be worthy of art; *and that the stage is not an empty show-place for human pride, but a market for the commerce of life as it is*

Finally, many complaints have been made of Shakespeare's use of **metaphorical images**, of their impropriety, their confusion, of their excessive accumulation ... But this is the characteristic of all poetry; **it is the only means Poetry possesses of transforming the thought**,—the instrument of the understanding, **into an image**, and of making it the instrument of the imagination ... We ourselves have mentioned **some false metaphors** in Shakespeare's works ... In Hamlet's soliloquy, in one sentence he speaks of a sea of troubles against which one takes up arms; yet even by such disparate images, the meaning is not confused, but rather made clearer With more plausibility the **accumulation of the metaphors** might be objected to. No rule is more correct than the old one of Aristotle, that, in the use of metaphorical language, *moderation is to be observed*, that there should not be too many enigmas, and that the weight of the single images should not oppress nor destroy the sense of the whole. But the question is here *whether we as critics have the greater taste, or Shakespeare as a poet*

If, however, we would truly make **proof of the poet's taste, we must penetrate through all this exterior**, which we may call the clothing or body of Art, **to its real soul**. We still meet everywhere with a degree of æsthetic and moral refinement to which, in the more polished times after Shakespeare, but very few poets attained. (1) Hear him, as a critic, pronounce **those rules of art in Hamlet**, and tell us who could have thought on the subject with more refinement! ... (2) Try his knowledge of human nature in the progress he has made **in the estimate of women**, and show us one to be compared with him in the delicate knowledge of the sex! (3) Advance thence to **his delineation of the manly character**, and count, among the most delicately organised, even amongst women, those who could find out the delicate line of distinction between false and true heroism as in *Coriolanus*. (4) Try the characters, the actions, the sequences, **the whole range of thought in his works**, and in this grand code of life, pictures, and wisdom, nothing is trivial, scarcely anything is to be called antiquated in the lapse of these 300 years!..... All the objections we have mentioned vanish however into insignificance when, for the sake of arriving at a right judgment of Shakespeare's taste, **we examine the whole structure and organisation of his works of art.....**

Expansion, Growth and Enrichment of the Human Mind:—Two thousand years lie between Shakespeare and the flourishing period of the ancient tragedy. In this interval, Christianity [Time] **laid open unknown depths of mind, the Teutonic race**, in their dispersion, **filled the wide spaces of the earth, the crusades** opened the way to the East, **later voyages** of discovery revealed the west and the whole form of the globe, **new spheres of knowledge** presented themselves, whole nations and periods of time arose and passed away; a thousand forms of public and private, of religious and political life had come and gone; the circle of views, ideas, experiences, and interests was immensely enlarged; **the mind thereby was made deeper and more expanded; wants increased**, passions became multiplied and refined; the conflict of human endeavours more numerous and intricate, the resources of the mind immeasurable,—*and all this in a manner totally foreign to the childish times of antiquity*. **This abundance of external and internal material streamed into the sphere of Art on all sides; poetry** could not resist it without injury and even ruin... Each dramatist amplified the drama in accordance with his comprehensive matter into more comprehensive forms. The things of the world had become complicated and manifold, the variety of men,—their natures, their passions, their situations, their mutually contending powers,—would not submit, when dramatically represented, to be limited to a simple conclusion or catastrophe; **a wider circle or horizon must be drawn**, the actions must be represented throughout their course, and the motives of actions must be more deeply searched for and represented. Art received the office of confining the utmost fulness of matter within a corresponding form..... **No one has accomplished this task so well as Shakespeare has done.** Therein lies a great part of his æsthetic greatness. No poet in the same space has represented so much with so little; none has so widely expanded this space within the given poetical form.....

Shakespeare conceives character to be the most important part of the drama, and action to be only secondary. And hence it is that Shakespeare's characters have always been his greatest glory. If on other points there are discordant opinions, all agree to praise him on this. His mastery of character and motives not only at all times attracted the best actors, but soon also the dullest censors, and transformed pedants or scoffers into enthusiasts. Pope called it a sort of injury to designate Shakespeare's characters by so inapplicable a name as copies of nature. They are not gathered out of a casual contact with a narrow circle of society, but sought for and obtained out of the whole of humanity; they are not borrowed from other poetry; they do not belong to the family of poetical but real beings, they are not designs from pictures, not even designs from nature, but nature itself.....

But although Shakespeare's characters are true pictures of nature, they are not nature only without the assistance of Art. They are neither mere abstractions and ideals, nor common chance personifications, such as life brings indifferently before us....If Pope, for example, said that Shakespeare's characters were individuals like those in real life, Johnson, on the contrary, remarked that the characters of other poets are individuals, but that Shakespeare's commonly represent classesThe paradox is true; when a character with him is most a portrait, then it is at the same time most the representation of a whole class of men. Nowhere are the peculiarities so numerous as in Falstaff, Othello, and Hamlet, and yet these are essentially typical characters, indeed, Hamlet has been called, with at least partial truth, *the type of men in general*.

This artistic blending of the general and the particular lies in this, that Shakespeare has nowhere depicted men of exceptional natures and properties belonging to any fixed time or place, his characters are, above all, men, stirred by the emotions and passions common to human nature in all ages. Shakespeare's representations of the passionate, the prodigal, the hypocrite, are not portraits of this or that individual but examples of these passions, *elevated out of particular into general truth*. Of whom, in real life, we may find a thousand diminished copies, but never the original in the exact proportions given by the poet. What is Lear but a concrete pattern of intemperance? and Coriolanus, of haughtiness? *So entirely is every part, every peculiarity, referred to the general idea of the character, to a ruling motive*. They are full of life as in nature, and yet are mentally transparent. They have been excellently compared to clocks in glass cases, where the mechanism, which sets them in motion, is visible.....

What is the moral spirit of Shakespeare's works? If Shakespeare seems to write with no moral aim, this very appearance is the triumph of his art. For, Art is not intended to proclaim moral truth by direct teaching, but by living, acting impulses, by illustration and example. The touching of the heart is far more adapted than the cold language to the head, to teach us to feel delight and disgust in right and wrong, and to develop in us that true self-love which strives to make the good and the beautiful its ownMorality was as much his object as poetry itself.....He called evil a 'deformity' and virtue 'beauty'.

His poetic impulse, therefore, is inseparably interwoven with his ethical feelings, because he took life as a whole, was himself a whole man, in whom the moral, æsthetic, and intellectual qualities were separated by no speculative analysis... **To knit poetry to life by this moral cement**, to sacrifice the outer beauty to the higher morality when the mirror was to be held up to life, to exhibit to the age in this mirror no æsthetic flattering picture, but a moral picture of unvarnished truth,—this is throughout the express aim of Shakespeare's poetry.

The relation of Shakespeare's poetry to morality and to moral influence upon men is most perfect In this respect, from Aristotle to Schiller, nothing higher has been asked of poetry than that which Shakespeare rendered. If Bacon felt the lack of a science of human passions, he might well have searched for this science before all in his neighbour Shakespeare, for, no other poetry has taught as his has done, by reminders and warnings, that **the taming of the passions is the aim of human civilisation**. *But the mere knowledge of good and evil has little influence upon human passions. One noble impulse does more towards the ennobling of men than a hundred good precepts*, and **a bad passion is best subdued by the excitement of a better**. **If the most desirable end in the moral perfection of men be, on the one hand,—** (1) that impulse and passion within us should not be abandoned to the blind constraint of nature, nor to the severe direction of imperative law, (2) that the sharp contrast, between an iron duty done for duty's sake and the sweet incentives of nature, should be softened; (3) that the oppression of the senses by excessive mental control, and the loss of inward freedom by the blind dominion of inclination, should be equally checked; (4) **that passion should be moderated by reason**, and, *on the other hand*, (5) that, that which is recognised as reasonable should remain not unemployed but active, so that the man should thus arrive at that completeness in which reason and passion, sense and mind, should be united in the well-regulated inner precincts of the soul in one allied, never-conflicting activity—*then will poetry ever be the most effective guide to this end*. For, **'serious maxims' frighten a man away from that which he endures in sport**; and therefore Schiller exhorted the poet thus to lay hold of men's minds... **Shakespeare battled**, on the one hand, like Goethe, for nature, **for the natural rights of the heart**, against the pedantry of propriety, against Puritanical austerity and mental error; he battled, on the other hand, like Schiller, **for freedom of mind, for moderation and discipline, against the common enemy of man, the excess of the passions**.....No man has been so well acquainted with human passions as he... Successfully to depict a strong passion demands experience and knowledge of the passion itself. But the problem is, how to combine with this possession that high self-command and inward balance which maintains itself free from the real influence of passion.. Many modern poets are only the products of their own passions. But when Shakespeare gives the rein to the wildest passion, it is a grand and beautiful sight to see how he himself is not carried away by it, and how, knowing its breed and race, he masters it to the yoke of his art, makes the unbridled still wilder by call and whip, and at the same time understands how to tame and guide it by a glance..... Possessing this property of perfect

self-command, our poet never falls into the fault of even our great modern poets, of investing passion or weakness with attractions which might captivate us and lead us morally astray.....

The action of the tragedy ought to be of such a nature that it **should excite fear and sympathy**, and by this means, **should purify these and similar emotions of the mind**. This law, Shakespeare satisfied in a manner utterly removed from all trivialities, in a manner never to be surpassed.....The nobler fear which he aimed at, is awakened in the spectator long before the issue.....We are intended as spectators *to learn from the drama to note more quickly, more sensitively, the beginning of the false way so that we may walk more circumspectly in our own drama of life*; the passion thus expending itself before us **is designed like an alarm** at once to **awaken watchfulness of our own souls**That this excitement of fear and sympathy would operate indeed for the purifying of our passions is certainly indisputable, provided we are at all susceptible of impressions of so noble a kind. If any Shakespearian drama were tolerably well represented, then, upon every sound mind, it will make this highest impression... . Looking down from the watch-tower of his Art, life appears more easy and capable of conquest, and if the great truth of his delineations shows us the actual world not in poetic sunshine, but overcast with manifold clouds, the poet has also given us the means and the position by which we may find new beauties and charms even **in these stormy elements of life**

Incentives to healthy Action Shakespeare's moral view starts from the simple point that **man is born with powers of activity which he is to use**, and with powers of self-determination and self-government which are to guide aright this use of the powers of action. **Whence** we are, and **whither** we go, these are the questions which the poet, as well as the historian, yields to Philosophy or to Nature'Men must endure their going hence, even as their coming hither, ripeness is all' 'Why am I?' make that demand to the Creator, 'it suffices me [to know] thou art' Nature only lends man his talents, gives them not, only bestows them in order that he may use them and render them back again. **In his moral system**, therefore, *everything bears upon the incentive to activity*. **Life appeared to him too short to waste it in idle speculations and inaction**. In Hamlet especially, this lesson is taught with severest emphasis. The most versatile endowments are, in this man, a useless, disordered mass because the electric spark of energy is not struck into them; because, with careful deliberation and overstrained sensibility, he has smothered the instinct of active power, that first-born of human gifts; **the speculative inquirer**, who makes the thought, and not the act, the measure of things, becomes thus at variance with the guiding stars of nature, with conscience, and reason itself.. . *It is only by freshness of action that he brings the sophist back to soundness of mind*. Just in the same sense **does the poet, in his comedies, also call us away from ascetic mortifications, from vain studies, from all the quietism of contemplation**, from the empty pastime of puns and wit; in Richard II, from the propensity to idleness and play; in Timon, from idle luxury and idle charity; **from all this, he calls us back to action**, since it becomes the gods alone to be mere spectators in this life. Above all, he punishes

in Antony the sinful waste of great and distinguished powers . . . (a) **Thus Heaven assists not the pious but indolent Richard II, in spite of his religious trust, but it helps the pious Helena who helps herself** (b) In the same spirit, the excess of love, with all its sweetness, is despised when it draws the man away from his strength, because 'he wears his honor in a box unseen, that spends his manly marrow' in the arms of love. And just so, **because work is not a curse but a blessing**, the poet's feeling goes against the tranquillity of idle, indolent repose. Therefore, he held nothing more **unmanly** than **to despond in misfortune, and to leave the helm amid storm and broken masts**. Therefore, in war lay the delights of his strong nature; genuine ambition is no sin in Henry V, proud war makes 'ambition virtue'. He has scorned to bring sentimentality and sensibility into a system or into attractive representation, to depict the isolated life of mind and heart,—the images of feigned and artificial sentiments, or the shrivelled forms of private and hot-house life, unless it be as caricatures which pass by the noblest aims of existence. Throughout, he points rather at the great stage of life and values action for mankind in general. **He had interest enough in the world not to grow weary in its contemplation, power enough to raise himself above its evils, perception enough to hear the harmony in its discords.** The hermit, who separates himself wholly from the things of the world, would have been called happy by Shakespeare as little as by Aristotle and Bacon, **nor, according to the highest conception of man, would he even have been called a man** For, evil will be only then wholly overcome when it is known and looked at in the face, and evil desires will be conquered only when their syren song has been resisted. For, **he cannot be a perfect man who has not been 'tried and tutor'd in the world.'**

From these maxims upon the active and guiding powers within us, the great truth develops itself that **if activity and action alone can give strength and fulness to life, moderation alone can add charm and lasting fruit....** This doctrine thoroughly pervades the works of our poet. *He sees the good not in the steep ascent, nor in the precipice, but in the even path through life;* and this path he shows us with that unhesitating assurance which gives confidence and courage to the soul. He seeks the medium, **not in suppressing the power which lies in passion, but in restraining it by the yoke of work**, not in the weakness of passiveness, but in the sparing of the powers, the use of which is indeed his first law. What he means by indecision and a half-way course, Shakespeare has shown us in York, what he means by moderation and a middle course, he has exhibited in Posthumus, who is strong even to the heroic control of his passionate and excited nature; and in Henry, in whom the middle course is not mediocrity but modesty in greatness. . . This is the same man who, from this very sense of moderation, so wisely took care not to deaden in himself the feeling of cheerfulness; not to refuse to action that 'sweet recreation,' the lack of which induces a sickly swarm of evils; to avoid that universal (continuous) plodding, which

Prisons up

The nimble spirit in the arteries,
As motion and long-during action tires
The sinewy vigour of the traveller.

In numberless passages in his works, therefore, **he calls us away from excess**, because *'the sweetest honey is loathsome in his own deliciousness'*, because he saw surfeiting changed to fasting; too great freedom, to restraint, wildness in joy or sorrow, destroying itself, rash haste, outrunning its aim; exaggerated grief, endangering life; and, exaggerated jest, recoiling on the jester. **He showed, in Hamlet**, how hesitating deliberation and fleeting insensibility mislead in action, **in Coriolanus**, how the highest endowments, by being overstrained, degenerate into contrary ones, **in Angelo**, how suppression of the senses avenges itself; **in Antony**, how suppression of the mind produces the same result, **in Romeo**, how excess of love is blighted, **in Timon**, how excess of hatred becomes powerless. How thoroughly penetrated Shakespeare was with **this principle of wise moderation**, will be clear to every intelligent reader.

That it is possible to do too much in good things is an express doctrine of Shakespeare's..... Thus **excessive liberality ruins Timon**, whilst moderate liberality keeps Antonio in honour, the genuine ambition which makes Henry V great, overthrows Percy, in whom it rises too high. **Exaggerated virtue brings Angelo to ruin**, while in those near him, the excess of Punishment proves harmful and cannot hinder sin. Mercy, the most God-like gift that man possesses, is also exhibited in its excess as the producer of sin.

Relativity of all values: He makes us familiar with the Truth that, in itself, nothing is altogether good or evil; that nothing upon earth is so base that it has not its good quality, and nothing so good that it cannot degenerate into abuse. Virtue misemployed, we have seen in Romeo, becomes vice, and vice is at times ennobled by its mode of action. Thus, we have seen Jessica innocently violate child-like piety, and Desdemona truth, Isabel practises feigned sin and Lorenzo pious deceptions without scruple..... Thus, even **Hamlet's too great conscientiousness** is not a crime but a fault, and some lack of it in Faulconbridge is not a virtue but a praiseworthy quality, because, in the great political world, another law prevails than in the domestic, and because the circumstances throughout change the character of the actions. ... Not the What alone, but How also, determines the worth of actions, the acting man depends, like the physician and the pilot, upon circumstances, and not merely upon himself and upon stated rules. Morality, like politics, is a matter so complicated with relations, conditions of life, and motives, that it is impossible to bring it to final principles. In the manifold collisions of duties, the balancing between man and man, between public and private duty, between case and case, is difficult.... Thus, the poet teaches us, by actions instead of words, by living examples instead of cold doctrines, by the eye instead of the ear. Unrelentingly he exhibits consequences of actions concisely and distinctly. And thus he works on mind and soul with a power, and sharpens reason and conscience in a manner, which far surpasses the ability of the religious orator and the philosophical writer... ..

Fatal as that doctrine, that in itself nothing is either good or bad, may be in the hands of the fanatic, who knows not, and wishes not to know the world, but strives to give form to his self-created phantoms, with Shakespeare it is perfectly harmless, because he not only knows

the world, but his healthful heart is unembittered by its evils, which he would like to abate or modify by means other than those suggested by priests or politicians. In him, the imagination of the poet is ever linked with the sober judgment of the man of the world.....In his opinion, the practical wisdom of man would have no higher aim than to carry into society the utmost possible Nature and Freedom; so that, for that very reason, he might maintain, sacredly and inviolably, the natural laws of society, respect existing forms; yet, at the same time, penetrate into their rational substance with sound criticism, not forgetting nature in civilisation, nor civilisation in nature.

How impartially unbiassed, how free from every prejudice, does Shakespeare therefore appear, in spite of his anti-conventional tendency, in spite of his noble freedom and independence, in all questions of that political, social, and religious life which is most exposed to the storm of revolutionary minds and morals!.....He was no fanatic and no infidel. He delineated heathens, free-thinkers, rationalists, and pietists—Brutus, Faulconbridge, Percy, and Katharine,—all with equal delight, if only they were worthy characters.....If he allows Biblical passages to be harmlessly perverted in the lips of his clowns, it was at any rate better than the gloomy use which the Puritans made of them, a frightful picture of which he holds before us in Richard III, who clothes his villainy with mangled passages from Scripture. If he harshly treats the servants of religion who, with their practices and devices, make worldly things their gods, he has still placed others, like Carlisle, in a great and illustrious light. If he condemns piety which makes a man weak and dull for the world, he has, however, exhibited in the most brilliant colours that faith and confidence in God which produces strong deeds in Siward, Posthums, and Henry V. If he permits bad and good to die in peace, without remembrance of religion, yet the pious Katharine and the repentant Wolsey die not without their consolations. ‘*Readiness and ripeness in everything*’ with the noble Hamlet and Edgar.....

Just as, in Religion, he stood for the freedom of individual conscience, so did he in Politics. He would not, that the freedom of man in the moral kingdom where he is his own ruler, should be endangered by the State.....But however high Shakespeare might have estimated the right of freedom of the individual, he would never have fallen into the vain cosmopolitism of the German poets of the former century, much less into the Utopian ideas of the World Republic, which would seek to rise above the conditions of space and time.....Coleridge has before remarked that, whilst among Shakespeare’s contemporaries, Massinger showed Republican tendencies; and Beaumont and Fletcher exaggerated the principle of Divine right; Shakespeare has nowhere testified his adherence to any fixed political party. He shews in the Roman plays that he esteems and appreciates all existing political forms, but was not insensible to the deterioration of all.....But to write a piece so imbued with democratic principles as Julius Cæsar; to place in the mouth of the tyrant Henry VIII. lessons against all undue exercise of power; to question in Richard II. the right of inviolability,—and this, indeed, at a time when James I. called kings earthly gods,—was to speak of political freedom.....When we read in Richard II, with what earnestness he insists upon the sacredness of

property, and in Troilus or in Othello with what rigour he maintains the strict observance of family, we understand how infinite is the gap which separates Shakespeare from the political free-thinkers of the present day! In the most civilised lands, we are sometimes obliged to defend, with all the weapons of reason and political power, the rights of family and property, which even savages protect in their communities. **Shakespeare has, indeed, sympathy with the lower classes who are poor and destitute.....** But whither the equalisation and prosperity of communism would lead, he has made most plain in Cade's revolution (Second part of Henry VI, Act IV, Sc. 7.) **No man has fought more strongly against rank and class prejudice than Shakespeare.** But how could his liberal principles have been satisfied with the doctrines of those who would have done away with the prejudices of the rich, only to replace them with the interests and prejudices of the poor and uncultivated? How would this man, who alludes so eloquently to the course of honour, have approved if, in annulling rank, degrees of merit, and distinction, we extinguish every impulse to greatness, and by the removal of all degrees, 'shake the ladder to all high designs'? If, indeed, no surreptitious honour and false power were longer to oppress mankind, how would the poet have acknowledged **the most fearful force of all, the power of barbarity?** In consequence of these modern doctrines of equality, he would have apprehended that **everything would resolve itself into power,—**

Power into will, will into appetite;
And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And, last, eat up himself. (Troilus and Cressida).

By far the purest and most beautiful of his wise sayings are grouped into two concurring series:—(a) on the one side, they are directed against all the varieties of conventional life, against all empty show and hollow ostentation, against all the insipid and superficial use of life; (b) on the other, they urge after the essence of things, after simple plainness, after truth and humility.

On the one side, his stinging wit is pointed against light-minded youth, whose judgments are mere lathers of their garments, and whose constancies expire before their fashions; against the favourites of the drossy age, the sweet gentlemen of the court, who regard keeping their word as *mauvais ton*, and whose accomplishments lie in hand-kissing and 'picking one's teeth'; against the coxcombs who smell like an apothecary's shop; against all the perversity which conceals the truth of nature with false hair and rouge; against the rogues and time-servers who 'turn their halcyon-beaks with every gale'; against the whole age, to whom 'a sentence is but a cheveril-glove'; against the self-conceited, whose voice sounds to themselves like supernatural music; against the glibbing spirit, whose influence is begot of that loose grace which shallow laughing hearers give to fools; against the diplomats, who 'unloose the gordian knot of policy, familiar as their garter', and against the politicians who could 'circumvent God.' From the store of passages of this kind, the tone of which alternates from the merriest humour to the bitterest sarcasm, this one point makes the fullest impression upon us, that this was not a man who

cared for the glitter and variety of the world.....In contrast to those court natures, with whom "*good faith*" is a mockery, how he stickles for neglected truth, how strikingly he sees in truth the only weapon with which to scorn the devil!... How warmly he speaks against 'the seeming truth which cunning times put on to entrap the wisest'! How forcibly and frequently he teaches not to measure things by a glittering appearance, but by their inner worth! To him it is,—

The fool-multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach :
Which pries not to the interior but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.

(Merchant of Venice. Act III Sc. I)

And he, therefore, is, in his sight, not a man of judgment who sets value upon the applause of the multitude. In his aversion to all show and falsity, lies the foundation also of his zeal against all hollow ostentation and self-elevation, against pride which is its own trumpet, against the vain who praise themselves otherwise than in the deed, and thus 'devour the deed in the praise'.....He delighted in unostentatious virtue and extreme humility joined to the most splendid endowments; but the resignation which renounces a merited reward, and the self-consciousness which needs not outward acknowledgment,—these seemed to him, amid all human virtues, to deserve the highest praise, or more justly to create the highest self-contentment; this doing and acting for the sake of itself, without regard to reward and commendation, was to him the great contrast to the insipid conduct of the world, which rests on vanity, show and folly (cf. Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita)

For those who, among us, daily fall lamentable victims to one-sidedness, caprice, and narrow-mindedness, Shakspere is a contrast of the highest value... So that the most complete characteristic of the poet and of his poetry, of its many-sidedness and its unity, lies perhaps in the following verse, which is written in his 105th sonnet,—

Fair, kind, and true, is all my argument,—
Fair kind and true, varying to other words ;
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.

19. R. G. Ingersoll (1891), the Great American,—Poet, Orator, Reformer—has these characteristic remarks in his Lecture on Shakespeare :—

The Theatre, once scorned, but now highly praised ; In Shakespeare's time, the actor was a vagabond ; the dramatist, a disreputable person—and yet the greatest dramas were then written. In spite of law, in spite of social ostracism, Shakespeare reared the many-colored dome that fills and glorifies the intellectual heavens. And now, the whole civilized world believes in the theatre—asks for some great dramatist—is hungry for a play worthy of the century,—is anxious to give gold and fame to any one who can worthily put our age upon the stage.

Shakespeare was an Idealist : He did not—like most writers of our time—take refuge in the real, hiding a lack of genius behind a pretended love of truth. All realities are not poetic, dramatic, or even worth knowing. The real sustains the same relation of the ideal that a stone does to a statue—or that paint does to a painting. Realism degrades and impoverishes.

Artificial aids, scorned : (1) Shakespeare did not rely on the stage-carpenter, or the scenic painter. (2) He put his scenery in his lines. There, you will find mountains and rivers and seas, valleys and cliffs, violets and clouds and over all, 'the firmament fretted with gold and fire' (3) He cared little for plot, little for surprise. He did not rely on stage effects, or red fire. The plays grow before our eyes, and they come as the morning comes. Plot surprises but once. (4) There must be something in a play besides surprise. Plot, in an author, is a kind of strategy—that is to say, a sort of cunning, and cunning does not belong to the highest natures. There is in Shakespeare such a wealth of thought that the plot becomes almost immaterial—and such is this wealth that you can hardly know the play—there is too much. After you have heard it again and again, it seems as pathless as an untrodden forest.

His Universality : He belongs to all lands. (1) "Timon of Athens" is as Greek as any tragedy of Aeschylus. (2) "Julius Cæsar" and "Coriolanus" are perfectly Roman ; and as you read, the mighty ruins rise and the Eternal City once again becomes the mistress of the world. (3) No play is more Egyptian than "Antony and Cleopatra"—the Nile runs through it, the shadows of the pyramids fall upon it, and from its scenes the Sphinx gazes for ever on the outstretched sands. (4) In 'Lear' is the true pagan spirit. 'Romeo and Juliet' is Italian, everything is sudden, love bursts into immediate flower, and in every scene is the climate of the land of poetry and passion.

He dealt with Elemental Things, with Universal Man :—The reason of this is that Shakespeare dealt with elemental things, with universal man. He knew that locality colors without changing, and that, in all surroundings, the human heart is substantially the same.

His Knowledge, so vast and deep : There was nothing within the range of human thought, within the horizon of intellectual effort,

that he did not touch. He knew the brain and heart of man—the theories, customs, superstitions, hopes, fears, hatreds, vices and virtues of the human race.

He knew the thrills and ecstasies of Love,
The savage joys of Hatred and Revenge;
He heard the hiss of Envy's snakes;
He watched the eagles of Ambition soar;
There was no Hope that did not put its star
Above his head, no Fear he had not felt,
No Joy that had not shed its sunshine on his face.

Play after play shows the inexhaustible Wealth of his Brain :—Read one play, and you are impressed with the idea that the wealth of the brain of a god has been exhausted—that there are no more comparisons, no more passions to be expressed, no more definitions, no more philosophy, beauty, or sublimity, to be put in words; and yet, the next play opens as fresh as the dewy gates of another day. The outstretched wings of his imagination filled the sky. He was the intellectual crown of the earth

Poetry and drama:—Poetry has Thought and Feeling: Drama adds Action to it. Shakespeare was not only a poet but a dramatist, and expressed the ideal, the poetic, not only in words but in action. There are the wit, the humour, the pathos, the tragedy of situation, of relation. The dramatist speaks and acts through others,—his personality is lost. The poet lives in the world of thought and feeling, and to this the dramatist adds the world of action. He creates characters that seem to act in accordance with their own natures and independently of him. He compresses lives into hours, tells us the secrets of the heart, shows us the springs of action,—how desire bribes the judgment and corrupts the will—how weak the Reason is when passion pleads—and how grand it is to stand for right against the world.

Examples of Dramatic Action:—It is not enough to say fine things, great things, dramatic things must be done..... Let me give you an illustration of dramatic incident accompanying the highest form of poetic expression: Macbeth, having returned from the murder of Duncan, says to his wife :—

Methought, I heard a voice cry—Sleep no more—
Macbeth does murder sleep,—the innocent sleep,—

* * * *

Still it cried,—Sleep no more,—to all the house :
Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawder
Shall sleep no more,—Macbeth shall sleep no more.

Upon this, Lady Macbeth exclaims,—

Who was it that thus cried?
Why, worthy Thane, you do unbend your noble strength
To think so brainsickly of things—go, get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring the daggers from the place?

Macbeth was so overcome with horror at his own deed, that he not only mistook his thoughts for the words of others, but was so

carried away from and beyond himself that he brought with him the daggers—the evidence of his guilt—the daggers that he should have left with the dead. This is dramatic.

Shakespeare dealt in contrasts, in lights and shadows : He was intense. He put noons and midnights side by side. No other dramatist would have dreamed of adding to the pathos,—of increasing our appreciation of Lear's agony,—by supplementing the wail of the mad king with the mocking laughter of a loving clown.

Characters and Types :—In his delineation of Characters, Shakespeare has no rivals. He creates no monsters. His characters do not act without reason, without motive. Iago had his reasons. In Caliban, nature was not destroyed, and Lady Macbeth certifies that the woman still was in her heart, by saying,—“Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done it.” **...Shakespeare's characters act from within.** They are centres of energy. They are not pushed by unseen hands, or pulled by unseen strings. They have objects, desires. They are persons,—real, living beings. Not so with common dramatists..... In real people, good and evil mingle. **Types are all one way, or all the other**—all good, or all bad, all wise, or all foolish. (1) Pecksniff was a perfect type, a perfect hypocrite—and will remain a type as long as language lives .. (2) But Hamlet is an individual, a person, an actual being—and for that reason there is a difference of opinion as to his motives and as to his character. We differ about Hamlet as we do about Cæsar, or about Shakespeare himself. Hamlet saw the ghost of his father and heard again his father's voice ; and yet, afterwards, he speaks of “the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns.” Is there no contradiction ? The reason outweighs the senses. If we should see a dead man rise from his grave, we would not, the next day, believe that we did.

Shakespeare, an Innovator, an Iconoclast :—He cared nothing of the authority of men, or of schools. He violated the “unities,” and cared nothing for the models of the ancient world. *The Greeks* insisted that nothing should be in a play that did not tend to the catastrophe. They did not believe in the episode—in the sudden contrasts of light and shade—in mingling the comic and the tragic. The sun-light never fell upon their tears, and darkness did not overtake their laughter. They believed that nature sympathized or was in harmony with the events of the play. When crime was about to be committed—some horror to be perpetrated—the light grew dim, the wind sighed, the trees shivered, and upon all was the shadow of the coming event.

But Shakespeare knew that the Play had little to do with the tides and currents of universal life—that Nature cares neither for smiles nor tears, neither for life nor death ; and that the sun shines as gladly on coffins as on cradles (1) One of the most notable instances of the violation by Shakespeare of the classic model, is found in the 6th scene of the 1st Act of Macbeth. When the King and Banquo approach the castle, in which the King is to be murdered that night, no shadow falls athwart the threshold. So beautiful is the scene that the King says : “This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses,”(2) Another notable instance is the porter scene immediately

following the murder. (3) So, too, the dialogue with the clown, who brings the asp to Cleopatra just before the suicide, illustrates my meaning.

His Men and Women,—What Wonderful Characters!:—What a procession of men and women—statesmen and warriors—kings and clowns—issued from Shakespeare's brain!... What women! Just glance at some. (1) *Isabella*—in whose spotless life, love and reason blended into perfect truth: (2) *Juliet*—within whose heart passion and purity met, like white and red within the bosom of a rose: (3) *Cordelia*—who chose to suffer loss, rather than show her wealth of love with those who lied in hope of gain: (4) *Desdemona*—so innocent, so perfect, her love so pure, that she was incapable of suspecting that another could suspect; and who, with dying words, sought to hide her lover's crime and, with her last faint breath, uttered a loving lie that burst into a perfumed lily between her pallid lips. (5) *Helena*—who said: "I know I love in vain, strive against hope. Yet in this captious and intenable seive, I still pour in the waters of my love, and lack not to lose still: Thus, Indian-like, religious in mine error, I adore the sun that looks upon his worshiper, but knows of him no more": (6) *Miranda*—who told her love as gladly as a flower gives its bosom to the kisses of the sun: (7) *Imogen*—who cried, "What is it to be false?"

Shakespeare has done more for women than all the other dramatists of the world.

His delineation of love and other passions—Shakespeare alone has delineated Love in every possible phase—has ascended to the very top, and actually reached heights that no other has imagined. I do not believe the human mind will ever produce, or be in a position to appreciate, a greater love-play than "Romeo and Juliet." It is a symphony in which all music seems to blend. The heart bursts into blossom; and he who reads, feels the swooning intoxication of a divine perfume.

Shakespeare was the greatest of philosophers:—(1) He knew *the conditions of success*—of happiness—the relations that men sustain to each other, and the duties of all. (2) He knew the tides and currents of the heart—the cliffs and caverns of the brain. (3) He knew *the weakness of the will, the sophistry of desire*,—and that "Pleasure and Revenge have ears more deaf than adders to the voice of any true decision." (4) He knew that the soul lives in an invisible world—that flesh is but a mask, and that "There is no art to find the mind's construction in the face." (5) He knew that *courage should be the servant of judgment*, and that "When valor preys on reason, it eats the sword it fights with." (6) He knew that man is never master of the event; that he is, to some extent, the sport or prey of the blind forces of the world; and that—"In the reproof of chance, lies the true proof of men." (7) Feeling that the past is unchangeable, and that, that which must happen is as much beyond control as though it had happened, he says:—"Let determined things to destiny hold, unbewailed, their sway."

Shakespeare was great enough to know **that every human being prefers happiness to misery, and that crimes are but mistakes.**

Looking in pity upon the human race, upon the pain and poverty, the crimes and cruelties, the lumping travellers on the thorny paths, he was great and good enough to say,—

There is no darkness but ignorance.

In all the philosophies there is no greater line. This great truth fills the heart with pity.....

He knew that place and power do not give happiness—that the crowned are subject, as the lowest, to Fate and Chance:—

*For, within the hollow crown,
That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
Keeps Death his court; and there, the antick sits,
Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp.....*

So too, he knew that gold could not bring joy—that death and misfortune come alike to rich and poor, because,—

*If thou art rich, thou art poor;
For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,
Thou bearest thy heavy riches but a journey,
And Death unloads thee.*

In some of his philosophy, there was a kind of scorn—a hidden meaning that could not, in his day and time, have safely been expressed. You will remember that Laertes was about to kill the king, and this king was the murderer of his own brother, and sat upon the throne by reason of his crime, and in the mouth of such a king, Shakespeare puts these words,—

There's such divinity doth hedge a king.

His wide and vivid Imagination : his deep Insight :—He exceeded all the sons of men in the splendor of his imagination. (1) To him the whole world paid tribute, and nature poured her treasures at his feet. In him, all races lived again; and even those, to be, were pictured in his brain. (2) He was a man of imagination—that is to say, of genius, and *having seen a leaf, and a drop of water*, he could construct the forest, the rivers, and the seas—and in his presence all the cataracts would fall and foam, the mists rise, the clouds form and float. (3) If Shakespeare knew one fact, he knew its kindred and its neighbours. *Looking at a coat-of-mail*, he instantly imagined the society, the conditions that produced it, and what it, in turn, produced. He saw the castle, the moat, the draw-bridge, the lady in the tower, and the knightly lover spurring across the plain. He saw the bold baron, the rude retainer, the trampled serf, and all the glory and the grief of feudal life.

(1) *He was a citizen of Athens in the days of Pericles.* He listened to the eager eloquence of the great orators, and sat upon the cliffs, and with the tragic poet heard 'the multitudinous laughter of the sea.' He saw Socrates thrust the spear of question through the shield and heart of falsehood. He was present when the great man drank hemlock, and met the night of death, tranquil, as a star meets morning. He listened to the peripatetic philosophers, and was unpuzzled by the sophists. He watched Phidias as he chiseled shapeless stone to forms of love and awe,

(2) *He lived by the mysterious Nile*, amid the vast and monstrous. He knew the very thought that wrought the form and features of the Sphinx. He heard great Memnon's morning song when his marble lips were smitten by the sun. He laid himself down with the embalmed and waiting deed, and felt within their dust the expectation of another life, mingled with cold and suffocating doubts—the children born of long delay.

(3) *He walked the ways of mighty Rome*, and saw great Cæsar with his legions in the field. He stood with vast and motley throngs and watched the triumphs given to victorious men, followed by uncrowned kings, the captured hosts, and all the spoils of ruthless war. He heard the shout that shook the Coliseum's roofless walls, when, from the reeling gladiator's hand, the short sword fell, while from his bosom gushed the stream of wasted life.

(4) *He lived the life of savage men*. He trod the forest's silent depths and, in the desperate game of life or death, he matched his thought against the instinct of the beast.

(a) **He knew all crimes and all regrets, all virtues and their rich rewards**. He was victim and victor, pursuer and pursued, out-cast and king. He heard the applause and curses of the world, and on his heart had fallen all the nights and noons of failure and success.

(b) **He knew the unspoken thoughts, the dumb desires, the wants and ways of beasts**. He felt the crouching tiger's thrill, the terror of the ambushed prey; and with the eagles he had shared the ecstasy of flight and poise and swoop, and he had lain with sluggish serpents on the barren rocks, uncoiling slowly in the heat of noon.

(c) **He sat beneath the Bo-tree's contemplative shade, wrapped in Buddha's mighty thought**, and dreamed all dreams that Light—the alchemist,—has wrought from dust and dew, and stored within the slumbrous poppy's subtle blood.

(d) **He knelt with awe and dread at every shrine**,—he offered every sacrifice, and every prayer—felt the consolation and shuddering fear—mocked and worshipped all the gods—enjoyed all heavens, and felt the pangs of every hell. He lived all lives; and through his blood and brain there crept the shadow and the chill of every death; and his soul, like Mazeppa, was lashed naked to the wild horse of every fear and love and hate. * * *

An intellectual ocean:—Shakespeare was an intellectual ocean, whose waves touched all the shores of thought; within which were all the tides and waves of destiny and will; over which swept all the storms of fate, ambition, and revenge; upon which fell the gloom and darkness of despair and death, and all the sunlight of content and love; and within which was the inverted sky lit with the eternal stars;—an intellectual ocean, towards which all rivers ran, and from which now the isles and continents of thought receive their dew and rain.

LATER CRITICISM.

So far, I have given a few extracts from some of the early Shakespearean critics in my Anthology which embraces a period extending to the middle of the last century. In a sense, it may be said that later criticism, during the last few decades, does not in reality reveal anything new except it be a new presentation of the old problems and points of view discussed by the earlier critics. Nevertheless it must be confessed that modern criticism has maintained the high æsthetic standards and traditions initiated by Schlegel, Goethe, Ulrici, Gervinus, etc., in Germany, and by Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, and others in England. The recent critics have certainly added to the literature of criticism with their ampler exposition and a wider and apter interpretation of some of the points or features of the great poet's writings. The labours of such outstanding scholars as Dowden, Brandes, Sidney Lee, Bradley, and others have greatly facilitated and popularized the study of Shakespeare's works in all their varied interests, social, æsthetic, moral, scientific, philosophical, philological, critical, etc. I have therefore ventured to devote a brief space to the review of some of the poet's excellencies on which these critics have laid stress. But, for a thorough and more detailed study, I would refer the reader to the books of these excellent critics.

PART I.

AS TO THE VILLAINY, WICKEDNESS, OR THE POWER OF EVIL, IN
HUMAN NATURE :

Analysis of Iago's Character : Prof. Brandes, a Danish critic, makes a valuable contribution to the subject by his analysis of Iago's character. He rightly condemns the view that has been held by some critics, that Shakespeare, at a certain stage of his life, set upon studying some of the dangerous passions ; and that, as a result of such study, and aided by his powerful and fertile imagination, he wrote out his Plays, converting those passions into the main motives or compelling forces of action in his tragedies ; and that, by these means, he conveyed a lesson and a warning to all in respect of their evil influence. It was thus, they think, that he brought out a play on jealousy. As the critic says,—

But that is not how things happen in the inner life of a creative spirit. A poet does not write exercises on a given subject. His activity is not the result of determination or choice. A nerve in him is touched, vibrates and reacts.

He was deeply impressed with the power and significance of evil. 'Othello' is much less a study of Jealousy than a new and

more powerful study of Wickedness in its might. The umbilical (navel) cord that connects the master with his work leads, not to the character of Othello but to that of Iago.....Believe me, Shakespeare met Iago in his own life, saw portions and aspects of him on every hand throughout his manhood, encountered him piecemeal, as it were, on his daily path, till one fine day, when he thoroughly felt and understood what malignant cleverness and baseness can effect, he melted down all these fragments, and out of them cast this figure.

How was Iago created by Shakespeare?—Prof. Brandes thinks that Shakespeare must have come across ‘Iago’ in real life, that is to say, the several qualities which went to group themselves in that powerful incarnation of Evil,—Iago. But can this be said of Macbeth, Edmund, Iachimo, or any of the evil historical characters of Shakespeare? A poet, dramatist, a story-teller, or an artist may read history, fiction, biography or any other literary work and come across, or see in real life, characters, scenes and situations which in his view might serve as permanent object-lessons for the warning, instruction or guidance of humanity. With his wide, vivid and moral imagination, with his powers of assimilation, discrimination and expression, he will certainly transform the material into a new and original form, into a thing of art, of beauty, of moral import for the benefit of his fellow-beings. What is really needed is that the writer or artist must have personally observed, experienced and felt the thrills and throes,—the diverse experiences and sensations of all kinds,—sweet and sad, grave and gay, comic and tragic,—common to mankind. Shakespeare may or may not have met an Iago in his own life, in entirety or piecemeal, but he certainly must have experienced the stings or shafts of villainy aimed at him or his dearest friends at some time during his life. Instances of human malignity, cruelty, aggressive selfishness, robbery, murder, hypocrisy and deceit abound in every land and age. It was easy for a great genius to weave these stray threads into one texture and produce ‘Iago.’

Shakespeare's Iago is the sum of all human malignity and villainy, brought within a brief compass, collected and condensed in one individual, superbly ‘masked in his falsehood and hypocrisy,’—

And the mask he has chosen, is the most impenetrable one, that of rough outspokenness, the straightforward, honest bluntness of the soldier who does not care what others think or say of him. He never flatters Othello, or Desdemona, or even Roderigo. He is the free-spoken, honest friend.

Even the indirect hints of his motives, thoughts and plans, would have remained hidden from our view, as Lamb says, but for his monologues, his outward mask being so impenetrable. Lamb further notices in Iago a vivid consciousness of strength and power. He pursues his victims with a supreme self-confidence,

and what is more, he deals his malignant strokes, not directly himself, but through others. He does not chuckle over petty successes in his schemes on minor men, as some of the small, inexperienced villains, 'the green probationers in mischief,' do.

Iago's 'Motiveless Malignity' explained:—Coleridge characterised Iago's villainy as 'motiveless malignity.' Brandes holds that, 'precisely in this lack of apparent motive, lie the profundity and greatness of the thing.' Iago does not directly and fully reveal himself even in his monologues. In his soliloquies, he only tries to find reasons for his malignity. As Brandes puts it, 'He is always half-fooling himself by dwelling on half-motives in which he partly believes, but disbelieves in the main.... These are half-sincere attempts at self-understanding, at sophistical self-justification.' As regards the source of Iago's villainy, the critic says,—“The serpent is poisonous by nature, it gives forth poison as the silkworm does its thread and the violet its fragrance.” This is the whole explanation of the malignity of Iago. The inborn wickedness of some, and the ignorance, stupidity, callous egotism or intense selfishness, and cupidity of others, are the main factors in life's tragedy, and account for a great deal of the world's misery.

Villainy would not thrive but for the opportunities open to it,—About the opportunities Iago had in working upon the simple-minded Othello, Brandes remarks that the union between Othello and Desdemona is one based upon the universal law of attraction of opposites,—an attraction which has everything against it,—difference of race and country; disparity in age; and the strange inflammable nature of Othello himself; added to a sad lack of self-reliance which such disparities excite in him. Iago clutches hold of these disparities and makes a double use of them, as formidable arguments by which, on the one hand, he unsettles Othello's mind against Desdemona; and, on the other, he raises false hopes in Roderigo and gulls him into financing him. These disparities Othello also knew, but at the beginning he did not trouble himself with any thought over them until the villain presented them in a new, adverse and ugly aspect to him. Brandes calls Othello's soul 'an inartificial one.' He lacked worldly wisdom because the whole of his life, was spent in war, camps and campaigns. Himself being good, he believed in others' goodness also. He not only believed Iago's honesty but was gulled by the latter's seeming cleverness into accepting him for his guide, as being much superior to himself in the knowledge of men and things. Again, the critic draws attention to the fact that noble natures generally do not think of their own worth. Vanity is entirely absent in them. It is due to this inherent modesty in him that Othello does not hesitate to feel later that he is disliked, scorned and beguiled by Desdemona,

Remarking upon the whole of the tragedy, Brandes calls it, 'not a representation of spontaneous jealousy but one of artificially induced jealousy,' in other words, of 'credulity, poisoned by malignity.' Othello's credulity and Desdemona's artless simplicity have contributed to the success of Iago's villainy and brought about the catastrophe. We are here reminded also of Swinburne's compliment to Othello as the 'noblest of man's making.' We see here "a great man who is at the same time a great child, a noble though impetuous nature, as unsuspecting as it is unworldly. We see a young woman, all gentleness and nobility of heart; who lives only for him she has chosen; and who dies with solicitude for her murderer on her lips. And we see these two elect natures, ruined by the simplicity which makes them an easy prey to wickedness....."

PART II.

PHILOLOGICAL SURVEY OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS.

Sir Sidney Lee has given a brief philological survey of Shakespeare's works. The critic calls Shakespeare an 'inventor of language,' by which, I believe, he means an inventor of phrases, expressions, ideas, proverbs. The right word in the right place, coupled with a happy expression, was the unique gift of Shakespeare. This explains why many of his phrases and words have entered into our daily commerce of thought. In the words of the critic,—

A magical faculty of expression was habitual to him, whereby word and thought fitted one another to perfection. The imaginative splendour of his diction, and its stirring harmonies, are commonly as noticeable as the impressiveness of the ideas. And yet often, we are magnetized by the luminous simplicity of the phrase, by the absence of ornament, by the presence of graphic directness and force which draw from all readers or hearers an instinctive recognition. They realize that the thought or feeling could be rightly expressed in no other way, although they are conscious at the same time that it is a way that is beyond their power to reach unaided. It is because Shakespeare has said superlatively well what so many of us think and feel, but cannot say with his apposite vigor, that so many of his simpler phrases have become household words,—the idioms of our daily speech.

By way of illustration, we give a few of those cited by Henry Bradley,—

a tower of strength;	coign of vantage;	household words;
in my heart's core;	to out-herod Herod;	a palpable hit;
made of sterner stuff;	the melting mood;	to the manner born.

Shakespeare has thus exercised an enormous, almost unparalleled, influence not only in developing the English language, but

also in enriching the literature of the world. He is well known for his power in extending the boundaries of human speech and for his fertility in coining new words by means of prefixes and suffixes and inventing compound words, idioms, phrases and expressions. As Prof. H. Bradley says, "In Shakespeare's hands, the language is strangely ductile; he continually uses words in novel, extended senses which, (when defined with the pedantic rigour inevitable in a dictionary), seem strained or faulty, but which one feels to need no justification when they are read in their context."

Sir Sidney Lee refers us to the wealth of (1) sentences of the poet's coining; (2) brief phrases of two or three words; (3) common single words including epithets and compound words. These words have gained so much currency with us that, strange to say, many of us do not know their authorship. They have all grown into universal proverbs, as, for instance,—

More in sorrow than in anger.
A man more sinned against, than sinning.
The better part of valour is discretion.
Brevity is the soul of wit.
The course of true love never did run smooth.
Every Why hath a Wherefore.
Assume a virtue if you have it not.
Tho' this be madness, there is method in it
Thus, conscience makes cowards of us all.

Among the figures of speech, we have the following,—

In my mind's eye.
The primrose path of dalliance.
The milk of human kindness.
A divided duty.
A ministering angel
A towering passion.

Shakespeare was a verbal alchemist who had "the marvellous power of turning physical conceptions to imaginative or poetic account as—cold comfort, hollow friendship," etc. Among epithets, the following few may be noted,—

Snow-white,	milk-white,	cold-blooded,	crest-fallen,
low-spirited,	heart-burning,	hot-blooded,	&c. &c.

Scholars, in every country, have been struck with Shakespeare's remarkable wealth of vocabulary. In this respect, the poet seems to surpass all other writers. An Englishman, tolerably well educated, has been supposed to use in his daily social and intellectual intercourse between 3000 to 4000 words and seldom more. Great thinkers, writers and orators of England have been

known to use about 10,000 words. The old Testament itself has been computed to contain about 5600 words, while our Shakespeare has made use of more than 15,000 words in his writings. As Prof. H. Bradley remarks, "There appears to be no reason to doubt the correctness of the common belief that the English poet, who surpasses all others in the skilful use of words, also ranks first in the number of the words that he has pressed into his service."

PART III.

SHAKESPEARE'S HUMOUR AND LAUGHTER, MINGLED WITH HIS SYMPATHY.

Professors Dowden and A. C. Bradley, both critics of great ability and deep insight, recognise in Shakespeare a capacity for kindly mirth or genial laughter. But for this capacity, Shakespeare could not have described human life in all its variety and completeness. In the words of Prof. Dowden, —

The character and spiritual history of a man who is endowed with a capacity for humorous appreciation of the world, must differ, throughout and in every particular, from that of the man whose moral nature has never rippled over with genial laughter.....A man whose visage 'holds one stern intent' from day to day,.....will hardly succeed in presenting us with an adequate image of life as it is on this earth of ours in its oceanic amplitude and variety. A few men of genius there have been, who, with vision penetrative as lightning, have gazed through life at some eternal significances, of which life is the symbol. Intent upon its sacred meaning, they have had no eye to note the forms of the grotesque hieroglyph of human existence. Such men are not framed for laughter. To this little group Shakespeare does not belong.

He has therefore given us the characters of Falstaff, Bottom, Touchstone, Feste, &c., in his comedies, and the Fool in 'Lear' in his tragedies. His is not a vulgar laughter prompted by a trifling or a ludicrous occasion, as that excited by the paintings and caricatures of Hogarth, — an English artist and cartoonist. Nor is it a one-sided laughter as that of Aristophanes, a comic poet of Athens; Juvenal, a Roman satirist; Rabelais, a French humorist; Cervantes, a spanish satirist; and others; but a many-sided one. As for the vulgar antics and jests, Shakespeare evidently disapproved them. We see this in Hamlet who objects to this sort of entertainment in clear and emphatic words. Most dramatists, swayed by their ideas of so-called sobriety (as noted and criticised by Victor Hugo), would exclude the Fool or Clown from the drama. But Shakespeare used him largely, with happy effect, in most of his comedies; and except in Lear, very

sparingly in his tragedies,—Hamlet, Cymbeline, &c. Prof. Bradley calls the part the Fool plays in 'Lear,' as one of Shakespeare's triumphs,—

Imagine the tragedy without him, you would hardly know it. To remove him would spoil its harmony, as the harmony of a picture would be spoiled if one of the colours were extracted. One can almost imagine Shakespeare saying, "Come, my friends, I will show you, once for all, that 'the mischief is in you, and not in the fool or the audience.' I will have a fool in the most tragic of my tragedies. He shall not play a little part. He shall keep from first to last the company of a king. Instead of amusing the king's idle hours, he shall stand by him in the very tempest and whirlwind of passion. Before I have done, you shall confess, between laughter and tears, that he is of the very essence of life; that you have known him all your days, though you never recognised him till now; and that you would as soon go without Hamlet as miss him."

As for the Fools or Clowns in Shakespeare's comedies, there are several of them, and each one is distinguished from others. But Prof Bradley singles out Feste in 'Twelfth Night' and bestows his love and praise on him,—

He is not, perhaps, more amusing than Touchstone (in 'As You Like It') to whom I bow profoundly in passing; but I love him (Feste) more.....He possesses not only the ready wit required by his profession, and an intellectual agility greater than it requires, but also an insight into character and into practical situations, so swift and sure that he seems to supply, in fuller measure than any of Shakespeare's other Fools, the poet's own comment on the story. Olivia's brother is dead, and she wears the deepest mourning and has announced her intention of going veiled and weeping her loss, every day for seven years. But, in Feste's view, her state of mind would be rational, only if she believed her brother's soul to be in Hell; and he does not conceal his opinion.....He may speak to Sebastian of 'this great lubber, the world'; he may tell Viola how 'Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun; it shines everywhere'; he may remark to the whole company how 'the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges'; but nobody heeds him.

But having thus a world of his own, and being lord of himself, he cares little for Fortune.....The 'sunshine of the breast' is always with him and spreads its radiance over the whole scene in which he moves.....Almost all the music, and the praise of music, come from Feste, or have to do with Feste. In this, he stands alone among Shakespeare's Fools. And when the Duke pays him for his 'pains' in singing, he answers, 'No pains, sir; I take pleasure in singing, sir.'.....When he is left alone, he still sings,.....and his soul is in the song,...a song at once cheerful and rueful, stoical and humorous; and this suits his mood and he sings it,—

A great while ago, the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

The same idea is repeated by Shakespeare in Lear's Fool,—

He that has and a little tiny wit,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
Though the rain it raineth every day.

Practically, it is Shakespeare that is speaking through the mouth of an imaginary Fool. As the learned Professor puts it,—

We owe these things, not to the players, but to that player in Shakespeare's company who was also a poet, to Shakespeare himself,—the same Shakespeare who perhaps had hummed the old song, half-ruefully and half-cheerfully, to its accordant air, as he walked home alone to his lodging from the theatre or even from some noble's mansion;—the same Shakespeare who looked down from an immeasurable height on the mind of the public and the noble, who had yet to be their servant and jester, and to depend upon their favour; not wholly uncorrupted by his dependence, but yet superior to it;...until, at last, he could say the words, 'Our revels now are ended.'

Ingersoll, the great American who studied, loved and admired Shakespeare with an intensity and profundity unique among the critics, makes these witty and brilliant remarks on the subject in his 'Lecture on Shakespeare,'—

For my part, I love the Clowns. I love Launce and his dog Crab (Two Gentlemen of Verona); and Gobbo, whose conscience threw its arms around the neck of his heart, (Merchant of Venice); and Touchstone, with his lie seven times removed, (As You Like It); and dear old Dogberry—a pretty piece of flesh, tedious as a king, (Much Ado About Nothing); and Bottom, (Midsummer Night's Dream), the very paramour for a sweet voice, longing to take the part to tear a cat in; and Autolycus, (Winter's Tale), the snapper-up of unconsidered trifles, sleeping out the thought for the life to come; and the great Sir John Falstaff, (Merry Wives of Windsor), without conscience, and for that reason unblamed and enjoyed, and who at the end babbles of green fields, and is almost loved; and ancient Pistol, the world his oyster; and Bardolph, with the flea on his blazing nose, putting beholders in mind of a damned soul in Hell; and the poor Fool, (in King Lear), who followed the mad king, and went 'to bed at noon'; and the Clown (Antony and Cleopatra), who carried the worm of Nilus, whose 'biting was immortal'; and Corin, the shepherd,—who described the perfect man, (in As You Like It), "I am a true labourer: I earn that I eat—get that I wear—owe no man aught—envy no man's happiness—glad of other men's good,—content."

There is in Shakespeare the mingling of laughter and tears, humor and pathos. Humour is the rose, wit the thorn. Wit is a crystallization, humour an efflorescence. Wit comes from the brain, humour from the heart. Wit is the lightning of the soul.

In Shakespeare's nature was the climate of humour. He saw and felt the sunny side even of the saddest things. You have seen sunshine and rain at once. So Shakespeare's tears fell oft upon his smiles. In moments of peril—on the very darkness of death—there comes a touch of humour that falls like a fleck of sunshine.

There is also an example of grim humour—an example without a parallel in literature, so far as I know. Hamlet, having killed Polonius, is asked, :—

Where's Polonius?
At supper.
At supper! where?
Not where he eats, but where he is eaten.

But his laughter is always mingled with sympathy: Shakespeare is a myriad-minded philosopher who can enter into the different moods of variegated humanity. He can realize, feel, and in fact live, the life of a lover, who is through and through swayed and thrilled by his passion; a cynic, reviling the world like Jaques; or a misanthrope like Timon; or a murderer like Macbeth; or a villain like Iago. And yet he has a tender corner in his heart for a clown too. Thus 'with beauty, or with pathos, or with thought, Shakespeare can mingle his mirth.' This quality of genuine, intense sympathy, this capacity to enter into, realize and be one with, the feelings, thoughts, expectations, sorrows and burdens of his many characters in every mood and situation,—in hope or despair, in joy or grief, in victory or defeat, in success or failure, in the consciousness of mistake and repentance over it,—has been powerfully and vividly, expressed by another great poet, Walt Whitman. We see how Whitman's heart went out in infinite tenderness to the hounded slave during the operation of that most infamous, lawless law, called 'The Fugitive Slave Law' of America,—

I am the hounded slave.
I wince at the bite of the dogs.
Hell and Despair are upon me, crack, and again crack, the marks-
men.
I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs, thinn'd with the ooze
of my skin.
I fall on the weeds and stones.
The riders spur their unwilling horses, haul close, taunt my dizzy
ears, and beat me violently over the head with whip-stocks.
* * *
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the
wounded person.

I see myself in prison, shaped like another man, and feel the dull unintermitted pain.

For me, the keepers of convicts shoulder their carbines and keep watch.

It is I, let out in the morning and barred at night.

Not a mutineer walks handcuff'd to jail, but I am handcuff'd to him and walk by his side.

* * *

Judge not as the judge judges, but as the sun falling upon a helpless thing.

Of the very worst, he had the feeling heart to say,—‘Not until the sun exclude you, will I exclude you.’ In this age of greed,—as Ingersoll says,—“when houses and lands and stocks and bonds, outrank human life; when gold is of more value than blood: these words should be read (and remembered) by all.”

Shakespeare can laugh at human follies, faults and failings. But such laughter is by no means heartless, cold, callous, or cynical. In Dowden’s words,—“It is like the play of summer lightning, which hurts no living creature but surprises, illuminates and charms.” His laughter, mirth or humour, is distinguished from that of other writers who stress only the particular virtues or vices of human nature,—

If we open a novel by Charles Dickens, we feel assured beforehand that we are condemned to an exuberance of philanthropy; we know how the writer will insist that we must all be good friends, all be men and brothers intoxicated with the delight of one another’s presence; we expect him to hold out the right hand of fellowship to man, woman, and child; we are prepared for the bacchannalia of benevolence. The lesson we have to learn from this teacher is that, with the exception of a few inevitable and incredible monsters of cruelty, every man, naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, is of his own nature inclined to every amiable virtue.

One should rather hesitate to endorse Dowden’s view of Dicken’s humour. It is undoubtedly free from that grimness which has perhaps earned Thackeray the name of a Cynic. The humour of Dickens is generally good-natured and buoyant, and even when he tackles some of the human vices and weaknesses, he is generous and keeps away from undue slur, vulgarity or invective. This buoyancy cannot certainly be condemned as ‘a bacchannalia of benevolence.’ Possibly, Dowden means to convey that Shakespeare is not open to the complaint of an ever present buoyancy of good nature in man or his inclination ‘to every amiable virtue.’ Shakespeare could be grave and gay by turns, and when gay, he abounds in kindly mirth,—

He receives an exquisite pleasure from the alert wit and bright good sense of a Rosalind; he can dandle a fool as tenderly as any nurse, qualified to take a baby from the birth, can deal with he charge. But Shakespeare is not pledged to deep-dyed, ultra-amiabi-

lity.....Nevertheless, he is disposed to let no side of a fact escape him. If it have a trivial, ludicrous aspect, by all means let us have that put upon record. The valet-de-chambre range of emotion is as undeniable a piece of reality as is the heroic; and the world somehow is wide enough for both valet and hero. It is desirable to ascertain what lights the one may throw upon the other.....

This laughter at human absurdity is in a way essential to the healthy growth of man. The grotesque element exists in every one of us though in a dormant state, and we must be capable of distinguishing it from the true and serious, with a view to our self-improvement. Towards this end, it is good and necessary to laugh at it. And thus we can say that 'our sense of humour is a servant of our passion for perfection.' Every great and right-minded intellect with a passion for reform, cries aloud against the follies and frivolities, the dark and devious ways of selfishness and injustice, of despotic power and tyranny, the false conventions and harmful usages of organised social groups or communities. In Shakespeare, that cry developed in force as he grew in age. We hear this cry in all his works,—in his Histories, Comedies and Tragedies.

Shakespeare's politics : Here too, the poet has equal sympathies for the Commons, the common people or the Plebians, and for the Aristocracy or Patrician class. He is not sparing in exposing the vices of both, or in approving their virtues. As Dowden says,—“He recognises that the heart of the people is sound; their feelings are generally right; but their view of facts is perverted by interests, by passions, by stupidity (and ignorance).” He would not at the same time hesitate to condemn “the intolerant haughtiness and injustice of the Patricians as brutal and stupid.... The weakness, the inconstancy and the incapacity of apprehending facts, which are the vices of the people, reflect and repeat themselves in the great Patrician (Coriolanus). The people did not appear to Shakespeare as Thersites; at worst, they appeared as Caliban (raw, uncouth and ignorant.)” But there is good nature or joyous humour in his condemnation as well as in his praise.

Remarking on the pride of Coriolanus, a typical Aristocrat, Prof. Dowden has these commendable words,—

His pride is not that which comes from self-surrender to and union with some power, or person, or principle higher than oneself. It is two-fold: a passionate self-esteem which is essentially egoistic; and secondly, a passionate prejudice of class. His nature is the reverse of cold or selfish; his sympathies are deep, warm and generous; but a line, hard and fast, has been drawn for him by the Aristocratic Tradition, and it is only within that line that he permits his sympathies to play.....Hence, for Cominius, Menenius, and Virgilia, Valeria, and Volumnia, and his boy, he has sincere regard, as they all belong to the privileged class of Patricians...Beyond this Patrician class, neither his sympathies nor his imagination find it

possible to range. The Plebians are "a common cry of curs" whose breath Coriolanus hates.....Brutus is warranted by the fact when he says,—

You speak of the people as if you were a god,—
Not a man of their infirmities.

PART IV.

THE PATHOS OF SHAKESPEARE.

As to the Pathos of Shakespeare, mingled with his humour and wit, we cannot do better than give Ingersoll's illustrations,—

Above all others, Shakespeare appreciated the pathos of situation. Nothing is more pathetic than the last scene in "Lear." No one has ever bent above his dead, who did not feel the words uttered by the mad king,—words born of a despair deeper than tears,—

Oh, that a horse, a dog, a rat hath life
And thou no breath !

So Iago, after he has been wounded, says,—

I bleed, sir; but not killed.

And Othello answers from the wreck and shattered remnant of his life,—

I would have thee live :
For, in my sense, it is happiness to die.

When Troilus finds Cressida has been false, he cries,—

Let it not be believed for womanhood;
Think ; we had mothers.

Ophelia, in her madness, "the sweet bells jangled out o'tune," says softly,—

I would give you some violets ;
But they withered all when my father died.

When Macbeth has reaped the harvest, the seeds of which were sown by his murderous hand, he exclaims,—and what could be more pitiful,—

I'gin to be aweary of the sun.

Richard, the Second, feels how small a thing it is to be, or to have been, a king, or to receive honours before or after power is lost; and so, of those who stood uncovered before him, he asks this piteous question,—

I live with bread, like you ; feel want,
Taste grief, need friends ; subjected thus,
How can you say to me I am a king ?

Think of the salutation of Antony to the dead Cæsar,—

Pardon me, thou piece of bleeding earth.

When Pisanio informs Imogen that he had been ordered by Posthumus to murder her, she bares her neck and cries,—

The lamb entreats the butcher
Where is thy knife ? Thou art too slow
To do thy master's bidding when I desire it.

Antony, as the last drops are falling from his self-inflicted wound, utters with his dying breath to Cleopatra, this —

I here importune death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.

And Cleopatra's comment on herself,—

Rather on Nilus mud lay me stark naked,
And let the water-flies blow me into abhorring.

To me, the last words of Hamlet are full of pathos —

I die, Horatio.
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit ...
The rest is silence.

PART V.

WHAT DO WE GET OUT OF SHAKESPEARE ?

We have already commented upon the instruction, the inspiration, and the guidance Shakespeare affords all of us. Dr. Johnson ; Victor Hugo ; great critics like Ulrici, Gervinus, Hazlitt and others, have enlarged on this aspect of Shakespeare's genius. Prof. Dowden, too, has a characteristic comment on this,—

The prolonged study of any great interpreter of human life is a discipline. Our loyalty to Shakespeare must not lead us to assert that the discipline of Shakespeare will be suitable to every nature. He will deal rudely with heart, and will, and intellect, and lay hold of them in unexpected ways, and fashion his disciple, it may be, in a manner which at first is painful, and almost terrible. There are persons of various temperaments. To one who finds the highest poetry in Shelley, Shakespeare will always remain a kind of prose. Shakespeare is the poet of concrete things and real. True, but are not these informed with passion and with thought ? A time not seldom comes when a man, abandoning abstractions and metaphysical entities, turns to the actual life of the world, and to the real men and women who surround him for the sources of emotion, and thought, and action,—and then he finds the strength and sustenance with which Shakespeare has enriched the world.....

Ingersoll, the prose-poet of America, compares the Great Dramatist to an intellectual ocean. "whose waves touched all the shores of Thought,an intellectual ocean towards which all rivers ran, and from which now the isles and continents of Thought receive their dew and rain." He also makes these wise and truthful observations on the inspiring lessons, thoughts and words of Shakespeare,—

Everything in Nature tells a different story to all eyes that see and to all ears that hear.....everything,—a flower, a painting,—statue, a star, or a violet; the more we know, the more we have experienced, the more we have thought, the more we remember—the more the statue, the star, the painting, the violet, has to tell. Nature says to me all that I am capable of understanding,—gives all that I can receive.

As with star or flower or sea, so with a book. A man reads Shakespeare. What does he get from him? All that he has the mind to understand. He gets his little cup-full. Let another read him who knows nothing of the impersonations of passion, and what does he get? Almost nothing. Shakespeare has a different story for each reader. He is a world in which each recognizes his acquaintances—he may know a few—or he may know all.

Leaving out for the moment the impression gained from ancestors, the hereditary fears and drifts and trends,—the natural food or thought must be the impression made upon the brain by coming in contact, through the medium of the five senses, with what we call the outward world. The brain is natural. Its food is natural. The result—thought—must be natural. The supernatural can be constructed with no material except the natural. Of the supernatural we can have no conception.

PART VI.

SHAKESPEARE, ON THE INTELLECTUAL FRATERNITY OF MAN.

Shakespeare, is an inspirer, a seer, a realiser of Intellectual fraternity of mankind: In the early part of the introduction, we have given a grand quotation from the poet J. R. Lowell, pointing to the fact that one uniform human instinct and aspiration bears along the whole of mankind. We saw Thomas Carlyle also emphasising the same aspect of influence of Shakespeare, as one of the powerful unifying forces throughout the whole of Saxondom (English-speaking humandom.) In view of Shakespeare's catholicity of sentiments and sympathies, and his recognition of human kinship, he belongs to the world. Dr. A. Comarswamy, an Indian Art Critic, writing at the Tercentenary day of Shakespeare's death, has almost the same sentiments as Carlyle and Lowell. He refers to the fallacy that was for some

time prevalent,—the fallacy of ‘the fundamental divergence of European and Asiatic character.’ He calls into question the logic of the statement emphasising the divergence; nay, he condemns it as an assumption, altogether illogical and fallacious, implying as it does that the earth is not wide enough for Europe and Asia to live side by side. He rightly calls the artificial barriers as frail and the divergences of character, if at all, as only superficial :—

Civilization must henceforth be human rather than local or national, or it cannot exist. In a world of rapid communications, it must be founded in the common purposes, (aspirations) and intuitions of humanity, since, in the absence of common motives, there cannot be co-operation for agreed ends. In times past, it has, indeed, been fashionable to insist upon a supposed fundamental divergence of European and Asiatic character.....But the premises were false: the divergences of character are superficial. For, the deeper we penetrate, the more we discover an identity in the inner life of Europe and Asia. Can we, in fact, point to any elemental experience, or to any ultimate goal of man, which is not equally European and Asiatic? Does one not see that these are the same for all, in all ages and continents? But it is not only in Philosophy and Religion—Truth—and Love—but also in Art (and science) that Europe and Asia are united and from this triple likeness we may well infer that all men are alike in their divinity (as they also are in their devilry).....Let us only notice here the singular agreement of Eastern and Western theories of Drama and Poetry.. ... The work of Shakespeare is in close accordance with Indian canons of Dramatic Art.....We read, for example, in the dramatic canon of Dhanamjaya, —

“There is no theme, whether delightful or disgusting, cruel or gracious, high or low, obscure or plain, of fact or fancy, that may not be successfully employed to communicate aesthetic emotion.”

The sentiments expressed above, coincide with the criticism we have offered upon a certain poet’s sentiment that the East and the West, being radically different, can never meet in fellowship of heart and mind, art and science, in political and social ideas and ideals,—(vide the part on Morals). As Robert Burns puts it, —

Then, let us pray that come it may,
As come it will, for all that;
That sense and worth, o’er all the earth,
May bear the *gree* and all that.
It’s coming yet, for all that,
That man to man, the world o’er,
Shall brothers be for all that.

PART XI. (a)

A BRIEF SKETCH OF SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND WORK.

Scanty Materials of His Life : Every one of the readers of Shakespeare will naturally be anxious to know who and what this great master-mind was,—the mind that created a Hamlet, or an Othello, or a Lear, or a Cordelia, or any one of the numerous other wonderful characters presented before us. Record of the life of every great person and every great event in the world has been left to us in the promiscuous mass of literature called History. But, unhappily for us, the literature connected with the life of this wonderful man is very meagre. It is a strange irony of fate that full authenticated details should have been denied to us. What is sadder still is, that this comparative want of details has led many a speculative wiseacre and many a sensation-monger in the field to launch forth his wild and unwarranted conjectures, with the sole object of wresting from Shakespeare his rightful laurels and ascribing his productions to another brain. But the vagueness about his life has, to some extent, cleared up; so that we can happily say that to-day we stand upon tolerably sure ground as to his life and work. This is due to the labours of such staunch explorers in the field as Sir Sidney Lee and others.

His Birth : The great dramatist was born on 23rd of April 1564 at Stratford-on-Avon, a small town of a few hundreds of inhabitants, rich in green verdure, and lying upon the ancient high-road from London to Ireland. The buildings in the place were mostly wooden, prominent among them being the old church and the Guildhall which accommodated a Grammar School. The parish register of the place shows that Shakespeare was baptised on the 26th April. The monumental inscription on his tomb records that on the day of his death, 23rd April 1616, he was 53 years old.

His Ancestors and Parents : The poet-dramatist traced his lineage, both from his father's and mother's side, to the yeoman (farmer) families of Warwickshire. His grand-father, one Richard Shakespeare, lived at Snitterfield, renting a small property there. Richard's second son, John Shakespeare, shifted to Stratford about 1551 and opened tanning business in Henley Street and also dabbled in other trades. Five or six years later, he married one Mary Arden, the youngest daughter of a Robert Arden, a well-to-do farmer in the neighbourhood. The poet was the third child of these parents, two sisters having died in their infancy. De Quincey speaks of the title 'mother of Shakespeare' as—'how august a title to the reverence of infinite generations and of centuries beyond the vision of prophecy !' The father was quite in affluence at the time of Shakespeare's birth. This is clear from the fact that he liberally gave help to the poor and needy and

generously subscribed to the bereaved families during the plague that broke out in Stratford in the July of 1564.

His Schooling. The poet's parents had no set schooling or college education. Neither of them seemed to have been able to write his or her name. With the object of giving their son all possible education, they sent the boy to the Free Grammar School of Stratford. In that school, children, from the age of seven and upwards, used to be taught along with English, Latin Grammar which enabled them to read Ovid, Virgil and Cicero. Latin was then the vogue in most of the provincial schools. The school-hours engaged the children practically the whole day both in winter and summer with of course intervals for food and recreation and holidays. The character of Sir Hugh Evans, the Welsh School-Master in the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' is obviously an echo of the reminiscences of Shakespeare's school days. The father's fortune began to decline with debts and difficulties, and the boy's schooling had therefore to be cut short in his 14th year only. It is perhaps fortunate that the academic course of education did not extend further; as Ingersoll says,—“How fortunate that Shakespeare was not educated at Oxford—that the winged God within him never knelt to the Professor. How fortunate that this giant was not captured, tied and tethered by the literary Lilliputians of his time.”

Various Attractions, to Excite the Boy's Interest : The surrounding district was full of historic memories and monuments. There was, for example, Warwick with its castle, rendered famous since the wars of the Roses, lying in the immediate neighbourhood. The district of Coventry also enjoyed a similar historic importance. More than this, the district afforded other great attractions to the boy Shakespeare. Religious dramas, first organised by the Church and then managed by the Guilds, used to be frequently staged there, and the boy must have seen some of them, with their startling scenes of souls burning in Hell, of the 'massacre of the innocents,' etc. Royal pomp, pageantry and splendour, too, Shakespeare had occasion to witness. In his eighth year, Queen Elizabeth paid a visit to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote in the immediate vicinity of Stratford. This the boy must have seen, as also the festivities in the neighbouring castle of Kenilworth, organised by Leicester, during Elizabeth's visit in 1575. In addition to these spectacles, Stratford, by itself, afforded opportunities of witnessing secular theatricals also. Many of the travelling companies of players frequented Stratford, and John Shakespeare, being the High Bailiff, they, as custom demanded, had first to pay their visit to him and wait upon him before staging their performances. The future poet must have seen some of these players and got acquainted with the glories of the theatre. A certain Willis, a contemporary of Shakespeare, has testified to

the fact that the young boy was present at one such representation in the neighbouring town of Gloucester.

Shakespeare's Marriage : Not far from Stratford, there lived one Richard Hathaway, a well-to-do yeoman. On his decease, Shakespeare, just a boy of 18 years, married Anne Hathaway, Richard's daughter, who was in her mature age of 26. This marriage of a boy who was hardly out of his teens, and who had as yet no means of living, and whose family conditions were straitened, looks rather Improvident and strange. Added to this strangeness, we are told that the poet's first child was born in May 1583, only 5 months and 3 weeks after the wedding. Possibly the marriage was only a confirmation of a formal betrothal which had already taken place. Of his married life, we have little record. At any rate, it does not seem to have been a happy one. In 1585, twins were born, a girl Judith, and a boy Hamnet who seems to have died in his eleventh year.

His Early life at Stratford : Having no opportunities to engage himself in, Shakespeare seems to have got into bad company and led himself into the ordinary, thoughtless but impetuous boyish freaks, poaching on forbidden grounds and stealing fruit or game from others' park. One concrete incident is cited. He seems to have committed a trespass on the park of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote. The punishment for the fault was, in those days, three months' imprisonment and a fine of three times the amount of damage done. Having undergone punishment for this trivial offence, Shakespeare seems to have resented it bitterly. He composed a ballad on the subject and posted it on the gates of Charlecote Park. This retaliation seems to have enraged Lucy into further prosecution of the boy which eventually led Shakespeare to quit his home to find a more congenial occupation in London by about 1585. He accordingly went to London, leaving his wife and children behind. But he used to pay visits to his wife occasionally at the beginning, and at longer intervals later on.

His Activities in London : Various reports are current of the manner in which Shakespeare began his early life in London. One of these is that he was employed to take charge of the horses of persons that rode to the theatres to witness plays. He is represented to have grown into such a favorite as a horse-holder that he had soon to engage other boys for his assistance to hold the horses. These boys styled themselves as 'Shakespeare's boys'. Another tradition makes it out that he entered the theatre as a 'servitor' to the actors; while yet another says that he began as a 'prompter's attendant'. Anyway, he seems to have shortly become an actor, in which capacity he made his earliest reputation. He began his career as a writer by adapting and rewriting the plays of others. Contemporary references show that in this

direction he made a name at the age of 28 and became the object of jealousy. In August 1592, Robert Greene, a dramatist, wrote in a pamphlet a warning to his friends and fellow-dramatists against the ingratitude of certain players,—

Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide, supposes he is as well to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is in his own conceit the only shake-scene in the country.

The allusion is beyond doubt to Shakespeare's name. Shakespeare adapted Greene's and Marlowe's *True Tragedies* (*Henry VI*) and brought out his revised play. This adaptation seems to have been greeted with approval by the public. The success of the new man who was just then beginning the author's life has evidently excited Greene's jealousy and prompted the lines quoted. Shakespeare, however, soon attached himself to some successful players of his day, and was entrusted with the task of revising or recasting the old plays. Possibly it was Leicester's Company of Players who engaged the services of Shakespeare to recast some pieces. He did such works, but they became the exclusive property of the company and were therefore not allowed to be printed, lest the interests of the theatre or company should suffer by the rival companies getting possession of them. The plays consequently remained in manuscript and thus facilitated the players doing as they pleased with the text.

Though Shakespeare naturally excited the envy of the elder poets, yet his personal charms disarmed even his enemies. This is clear from the fact that Ben Jonson, who at first made no secret of his ill-will towards Shakespeare, afterwards wrote very well of him in the eulogy prefixed to the *Folio*. We are also familiar with his tribute in verse (printed in the *Anthology*).

Shakespeare as a Play-wright: Now Shakespeare started as a writer by adapting and re-writing the plays of others. '*Love's Labour Lost*' is regarded as the first of such adaptations. It was probably got up about 1591, revised in 1597, and published in 1598, when the name of Shakespeare first appeared in print as its author. He seems to have taken to rhyming at the beginning but gradually diverted to blank verse, impressed with Marlowe's achievement in that direction. Thus, Shakespeare's first master was Christopher Marlowe who was born about two months earlier. His first tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* came out somewhere between 1591—1593. The whole of his dramatic career seems to have been concentrated in the two decades between the 27th and 47th years of his life, as shown in Part IV, page VII, ante. This gives us an average of two plays annually.

Under the Patronage of the Nobility: In London, Shakespeare seems to have earned the patronage of the Earl of Southampton. Many of his sonnets are addressed to this nobleman. After James I, ascended the throne of England, Shakespeare is said to have been called upon to act before the king. His last play 'Tempest' was performed in celebration of the marriage of princess Elizabeth with the Elector Frederick in 1613.

His Attachment to Stratford · After a lapse of about 11 years, he returned to Stratford. As already stated, while in London, he used to visit his home at least once a year. By about 1587, he purchased the largest house in Stratford for £60, equivalent to £480 at the modern value. He then improved the house by making several suitable repairs. This purchase raised Shakespeare in his fellow-townsmen's estimate and brought him a reputation for wealth. Further, he applied through his father, for 'a coat of arms' and secured it. These incidents had already earned Shakespeare a decent status in the social ranks of Stratford. In London he was getting good income both as actor and play-wright and became a partner in the Globe Theatre, when it was built in 1597. On the average, he is stated to have been getting an annual income of about £130 or £140 according to present valuation. His income seems to have steadily increased so much so that he became the owner of large landed property in the town. As a landowner he had to face some lawsuits for which he displayed much skill and aptitude. He is reported to have been generally successful in them.

Last Years at Stratford · Some of his best plays, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Julius Cæsar, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, Tempest are usually traced to this period of prosperity. After 1611, we have it on Sir Sidney Lee's authority, he gave up his dramatic career and stayed for the most part in stratford. About the beginning of 1616, his health seems to have shown signs of failing and he died in April of that year. He was buried in Stratford Church.

His Children: His two daughters Susannah and Judith survived him for a pretty long time. Susannah married one John Hall, a reputed Physician in 1607. She had only one child, a daughter, Elizabeth, born in 1608. Thus the poet became a grandfather in his 45th year. This Elizabeth married, in 1626, Mr Thomas Nash, a country gentleman of good rank and wealth. Again in 1649, on Nash's death, she married Sir John Barnard, Knight, of Abington. She died in 1669, leaving no issue, while her mother Susannah had already died in 1649.

Judith, the younger daughter, married Mr. Thomas Quiney, wine-dealer at Stratford, just before her father's death. Three children were born to her but they died young. She herself died in 1662. Thus with the death of Elizabeth or Lady Barnard, the lineal descendants of Shakespeare terminated.

The Baconian Theory: As regards the theory that has sprung up in certain quarters, that Shakespeare with his sadly deficient education could not have written the plays ascribed to him, and that, probably, the true authorship belongs to Bacon, we do not hesitate to characterise it as a mere canard. Before the middle of the 19th century, nobody thought of breathing a word of doubt about Shakespeare's authorship. Till then, Shakespeare's fame as a great dramatist was secure and unquestioned. Unhappily, the last three or four decades of that century have assumed a different turn. The hoax, played by the new theory, originated in some American criticism and was pushed on by a fanatical woman,—Miss Delia Bacon. On this subject, we need only quote here Ingersoll, the great American, who has successfully smashed this senseless, unfounded theory. We give his own brilliant exposition, which is free from academic technique or dialectics, and is conclusive as far as it goes,—

The plays of Shakespeare show so much knowledge, thought and learning, that many people—those who imagine that universities furnish capacity—contend that Bacon must have been the author. **We know Bacon.** We know that he was a **scheming politician, a courtier, a time-server of church and kings, and a corrupt judge.** We know that he never admitted the truth of the Copernican system—that he was doubtful whether instruments were of any advantage in scientific investigation—that he was ignorant of the higher branches of mathematics, and that, as a matter of fact, he added but little to the knowledge of the world. When he was more than 60 years of age, **he turned his attention to poetry....** But if you will read these verses, you will say that the author of 'Lear' and 'Hamlet' did not write them.

Bacon dedicated his work on the 'Advancement of Learning, Divine and Human' to James I ; and in his dedication he stated that there had not been, since the time of Christ, any king or monarch so learned in all erudition, divine or human. He placed James the First, before Marcus Amelius and all other kings and emperors since Christ, and concluded by saying that James the First had "the power and fortune of a king, the illumination of a priest, the learning and universality of a philosopher." This was written of James the First, **described by Macaulay as a "stammering, slobbering, trembling coward, whose writings were deformed by the grossest and vilest superstitions,—witches being the special objects of his fear, his hatred and his persecution,"**

It seems to have been taken for granted that if Shakespeare was not the author of the great dramas, Lord Bacon must have been. It has been claimed that Bacon was the greatest philosopher of his time. And yet in reading his works, we find that there was in his mind **a strange mingling of foolishness and philosophy.** He takes pains to tell us and to write it down for the benefit of posterity, **such absurdities as,—**

- (1) That "snow is colder than water, because it hath more spirit in it, and that quicksilver is the coldest of all metals, because it is the fullest of spirit."
- (2) He stated that he hardly believed that you could contract air by putting opium on top of the weather glass, and gave the following reasons:—"I conceive that opium and the like make spirits fly rather by malignity than by cold."
- (3) This great philosopher gave the following recipe for staunching blood,—“Thrust the part that bleedeth into the body of a capon, new ripped and bleeding. This will staunch the blood. The blood, as it seemeth, sucking and drawing up by similitude of substance the blood it meeteth with, and so itself going back."
- (4) This philosopher also records this important fact,—“Divers witches among heathen and Christians have fed upon man's flesh to aid, as it seemeth, their imagination with high and foul vapor." * * *

Lord Bacon was not only a philosopher, but he was a **biologist**, as appears from the following,—

“As for living creatures, it is certain that their vital spirits are a substance compounded of an airy and flamy matter; and although air and flame being free, will not mingle, yet, bound in by a body that hath some fixing, will (mingle).”

Now and then, the inventor of deduction reasons by analogy. He says,—“As snow and ice holpen, and their cold, activated by nitre or salt, will turn water into ice, so it may be it will turn wood or stiff clay into stone.”

Bacon seems to have been a **believer in the transmutation of metals**, and solemnly gives a formula for changing silver or copper into gold. He also believed in the transmutation of plants, and had arrived at such a height in entomology that he informed the world that ‘insects have no blood.’ It is claimed **that he was a great observer** and as evidence of this he recorded the wonderful fact,—

- (1) that “tobacco, cut and dried by the fire loses, weight;”
- (2) that “bears in the winter wax fat in sleep, though they eat nothing;”
- (3) that “tortoises have no bones;”
- (4) that “there is a kind of stone, if ground and put in water where cattle drink, the cows will give more milk;”
- (5) that “it is hard to cure a hurt in a Frenchman's head but easy (to cure) in his leg;”

- (6) that " it is hard to cure a hurt in an Englishman's leg ; but easy (to cure) in his head. "
- (7) that " wounds made with brass weapons are easier to cure than those made with iron ; "
- (8) that " lead will multiply and increase, as in statues buried in the ground ; "
- (9) and that " the rainbow, touching anything, causeth a sweet smell. "

Bacon seems also to have turned his attention to **ornithology**, and says (1) that " eggs laid in the full of the moon breed better birds ; " (2) that " you can make swallows white by putting ointment on the eggs before they are hatched. "

He also informs us (1) that " witches cannot hurt kings as easily as they can common people ; " (2) that perfumes dry and strengthen the brain ; " (3) that " any one in the moment of triumph can be injured by another who casts an envious eye, and the injury is greatest when the envious glance comes from the oblique eye. "

Lord Bacon also turned his attention to **medicine**, and he states (1) that " bracelets made of snakes are good for curing cramps ; " (2) that " the skin of a wolf might cure the colic because a wolf has great digestion ; (3) that " eating the roasted brains of hens and hares strengthens the memory ; " (4) that " if a woman about to become a mother, eats a good many quinces and considerable coriander seed, the child will be ingenious ; " and (5) that " the moss which grows on the skull of an unburied dead man is good for staunching blood. " (6) He also expresses doubt, however, " as to whether you can cure a wound by putting ointment on the weapon that caused the wound instead of on the wound itself. ".....

It is claimed by the advocates of the Baconian theory that their hero **stood at the top of science** ; and yet " it is absolutely certain that he was ignorant of the law of the acceleration of falling bodies, although the law had been made known and printed by Galileo thirty years before Bacon wrote upon the subject. Neither did this great man understand the principle of the lever. He was not acquainted with the precession of the equinoxes, and as a matter of fact was ill-read in those branches of learning in which, in his time, the most rapid progress had been made. " * * *

We have the right to compare what Bacon wrote with what, it is claimed, Shakespeare produced. I call attention to one thing,—to **Bacon's opinion of human love**. It is this,—" The Stage is more beholden to love than the life of man. As to the Stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies ; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury. Amongst all the great and worthy persons, there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love, which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion." The author of " Romeo and Juliet " never wrote that.

Let us see what sense of honor Bacon had. In writing commentaries on certain passages of Scripture, Lord Bacon tells a courtier, who has committed some offence, how to get back into the graces of his prince or king. Among other things he tells him not to appear too cheerful, but to assume a very grave and modest face; not to bring the matter up himself; to be extremely industrious, so that the prince will see that it is hard to get along without him; also to get his friends to tell the prince or king how badly he, the courtier, feels; and then he says, all these failing, "let him contrive to transfer the fault to others."

It is true that we know but little of Shakespeare, and consequently do not positively know that he did not have the ability to write the plays; but we do know Bacon, and we know that he could not have written these plays; consequently, they must have been written by a comparatively unknown man, that is to say, by a man who was known by no other writings. The fact that we do not know Shakespeare, except through the Plays and Sonnets, make it possible for us to believe that he was the author.

Some people have imagined that the Plays are written by several, but this only increases the wonder, and adds a useless burden to credulity.

Bacon published in his time all the writings that he claimed. Naturally, he would have claimed his best. Is it possible that Bacon left the wondrous children of his brain on the 'door-step' of Shakespeare, and kept the deformed ones at home? Is it possible that he fathered the failures and deserted the perfect?.... Of course, it is wonderful that so little has been found touching Shakespeare; but is it not equally wonderful, if Bacon was the author, that not a line has been found in all his papers, containing a suggestion, or a hint, that he was the writer of these plays? Is it not wonderful that no fragment of any scene—no line—no word—has been found.....

Some have insisted that Bacon kept the authorship secret because it was disgraceful to write Plays. This argument does not cover the Sonnets,—and besides, one who had been stripped of the robes of office for receiving bribes as a judge, could have borne the additional disgrace of having written "Hamlet." The fact that Bacon did not claim to be the author, demonstrates that he was not. Shakespeare claimed to be the author, and no one in his time or day denied the claim. This demonstrates that he was.

Bacon published his works, and said to the world,—“This is what I have done”.....Bacon's best can be compared with Shakespeare's common, but Shakespeare's best rises above Bacon's best like a domed temple above a beggar's hut.....

PART XII.

The date and source of the play of 'Othello'.

Date of the Play: *External Evidence:* The earliest edition of the play was a quarto published in 1622. This was apparently a reprint from an old copy of the play. It omitted some lines, but kept many oaths, adjurations and other expletives, which pointed to the fact that the play dated from still earlier years. A second quarto was published in 1640, with slight variations from the first. Taking the Play as a whole, we find direct evidence of its date comparatively wanting. An attempt has been made in some quarters to read, in Othello's words,—'Our new heraldry is hands, not hearts,'—a clue to fix its date at 1611, when the new order of baronets, with its heraldry of hands, was introduced.

But the available *internal evidence* of metre, style and conception, amply rebuts this supposition, and points to a date somewhere between 1600 and 1605. There is much resemblance in the language of Othello with the plastic speech of Hamlet in 1603. But the latter contains several empyrean flights of intellect and the rich embellishments of imagination which are absent in the other. Nonetheless, we find in Othello as much loftiness and magnificence as are necessary and proportionate to the theme treated of. For example, Othello's touching 'Farewell', his pathetic laments and self-reproaches, have all the superbness met with in Hamlet. In Macbeth (1606) we are at times haunted by a feeling that the words are strained to convey more meaning than they could bear: but in Othello, it is not so; everything is clear, direct and straight. The probability therefore is that it was written about 1604, and that it was staged and acted soon after, in November 1604, before the Court at Whitehall. This fact is attested by Malone.

Source of the Play: The outlines of the plot of Othello seem to have been based upon an old story,—the 27th of the 100 novels in Cinthio's *Hecatomithi*. This work was originally published in Sicily in 1565. It was frequently reprinted in Italy and rendered into other European languages. In 1795, it was translated into English by W. Parr. But Shakespeare must have had access to it much earlier, either by hearing the story repeated by persons, or by reading it in original, in which case he must have possessed at least some smattering knowledge of Italian. The tale treats of a Moorish Captain, wedding a high-born, virtuous and charming damsel of Venice. This novel forms the back-ground of the play and contains almost every incident dealt with in Othello. But Shakespeare departs widely from the original story. The dramatic treatment of the tragic theme and the delineation of Othello and other characters are wonderful achievements of his adaptative, creative, transforming genius, known in one word as 'characterization'.

PART XIII.

The Tragedy of Othello, as a Dramatic Piece.

'*Othello*' stands in the first rank along with the other great tragedies,—*Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Cæsar*. In these, Shakespeare's dramatic art has reached its utmost perfection. As usual, the critics are variously moved in their admiration for them. Some regard *Othello* as the very best of Shakespeare's tragedies; some give the palm to *Lear*; some to *Hamlet*, some to *Macbeth*. *Dowden* gives the first place to '*Lear*' and calls it Shakespeare's 'greatest single achievement.' *Craig* places *Othello* above *Lear*. *Goethe* regards *Hamlet* as the 'finest manifestation of Shakespeare's genius'. *Macaulay* considers *Othello* as 'perhaps, the greatest work in the world.' But whatever the final verdict may be, there is no doubt that it is a most powerful tragedy,—a consummate work of Art,—that has never been equalled or surpassed. Who has ever approached Shakespeare in his command and mastery of language; in his poetic diction; in the truthful delineation of character; in the marvellous art with which he prepares and contrives the web of various scenes and situations and weaves them into the woof of his dramatic persons; in the selective power and adaptive skill by which he picks up a common story and converts it into a most perfect tragedy in human language? *He gives us, often in the same play, a momentary glimpse of Heaven under the magic sway of Love*, as in the happy meeting of *Othello* and *Desdemona* after the stormy voyage; and then, transforming that divine passion into its opposite (*Hate*) under the blighting influence of *Jealousy*, excited by a malignant devil, he gradually ushers us into an *Inferno* where we witness scenes of heart-rending woe and weeping, scenes of acutest mental suffering, pitiful sorrow, pathetic lament, poignant regrets and self-reproaches, remorseful outbursts that touch us to tears,—tears of sympathy and sorrow. Although we are moved to various moods and feelings in this play, yet our interest has been engaged and sustained throughout, until we come to the last Act, where we become dazed and horror-struck by the catastrophic deaths of so many good and innocent lives. As one editor, *Mr. H. C. Hart*, remarks,—

In whichever moods we arise from a study of *Othello*, we feel that perfection has been attained. The beauty and skill are unequalled; the strain of interest has reached its utmost limit.... To my thinking, *Othello* is the most perfect play that Shakespeare wrote. The central interests are more absorbing and continuously in evidence than elsewhere. We are not asked to fritter away our sorrows on any minor griefs. *Cassio's* leg is nothing. A tempest hardly arouses our interest. Never for a fraction of a scene, do we lose sight of the point at issue,—Will this thorough-paced villain succeed in his outrageous plots?

We sorrow for *Desdemona*, and we suffer with *Othello*. We are horrified, while we marvel at *Iago's* malignant skill; and all the

while we feel that **one purpose** runs through the pages and will have its way, and that purpose is revenge,—Iago's baseless and self-satisfying vengeance. As **ambition** is the key-note of *Macbeth*, **ingratitude** of *Lear*, **intellect strained** to insanity of *Hamlet*, so the guiding principle in *Othello* is **revenge**.

Iago is indeed an embodied vengeance. All the players are his puppets. Other villains are suspected or watched. But Iago has the complete confidence of every one from start to finish. He is always "*honest Iago*" to everybody. Roderigo needs a touch of the whip now and then, but that is a device to show Iago's skill in doing it. In other plays, the characters, as it were, unfold one another. Iago unfolds them all, including himself. If he had not been condescending enough to take us into his confidence (by his soliloquies), what should we know of him? Nothing.... His purpose is not loud but deep. It is no part of his "compliment extern," And *his mocking nature is as proof against emotion as it is against the stings of conscience*, or as Cassio's coat, was against Roderigo's sword. He joins his wits to this purpose.....The previous scene between Othello and the Senators, is Othello's own proud and unbiassed glory of the whole play. In the bed-chamber scene, it is all Iago's handiwork.....

Another illuminating critic and admirer, William Hazlitt, has the following apt and beautiful comment on this play,—

Othello excites our sympathy to an extraordinary degree. The moral it conveys has a closer application to the concerns of human life than that of almost any other of Shakespeare's plays. It comes directly home to the bosoms and passions of men. The pathos in *Lear* is indeed more dreadful and overpowering; but it is less natural, and less of everyday's occurrence. We have not the same degree of sympathy with the passions described in *Macbeth*. The interest in *Hamlet* is more remote and reflex. That of *Othello* is at once equally profound and affecting.....

Again, the movement of passion in *Othello* is exceedingly different from that of *Macbeth*. In *Macbeth*, there is a violent struggle between opposite feelings, between ambition and stings of conscience, almost from first to last; in *Othello*, the doubtful conflict between contrary passions, though dreadful, continues only for a short time. The chief interest here is excited by the alternate ascendancy of different passions,—by the entire and unforeseen change from the fondest Love and the most unbounded Confidence to the tortures of Jealousy and the madness of Hatred. The nature of the Moor is noble, confiding, tender and generous; but his blood is of the most inflammable kind.....It is in working his noble nature up to this extremity,.....through rapid but gradual transitions,.....that Shakespeare has shown the mastery of his genius and of his power over the human heart.

The third Act of *Othello* is his finest display, not of knowledge or passion separately, but of the two combined, of the knowledge of character with the expression of passion, of consummate art in the keeping up of appearances with the profound workings of nature,

of the convulsive movements of uncontrollable agony, and of the power of inflicting torture and suffering it.....If anything could add to the force of our sympathy with Othello, or compassion for his fate, it would be the frankness and generosity of his nature, which so little deserve it (such a fate).

What a real world of strange characters and contrasts! Shakespeare's world is a wonderful compound of realities. We see **Brabantio**, a typical aristocrat, with his arrogant notions of class-superiority, giving vent to his dislike and wrath,—unappeased and unappeasable—over the marriage of his daughter with a foreigner. Then, there is the **Duke** or **President of the Senate**, who is alert and efficient, and takes prompt and sufficient measures to avert the danger of Turkish attack on Cyprus; who tries to hold the balance even between the disputants and takes a calmer and more sensible view of the love-affair; who tries to act as the reconciler or peace-maker between the two contending parties. There is yet another type of the official class, exemplified by **Lodovico**, who is entrusted with the important duties of a State Messenger in times of war. He is not the usual kind of a hide-bound official who is content with nodding 'Ayes' and 'Nays' to his superiors. In the discharge of his duties, he retains his own independent judgment and boldly, though mildly, takes Othello to task, when the latter publicly insults Desdemona by striking her. He is as just in admiring where admiration is due, as in condemning when condemnation is called for. There is still another class typified in **Montano**. He is good enough to be placed in charge of a governorship in times of peace. But in times of war, when superior skill and strategy, care and alacrity are required, he is wisely replaced by Othello. Though, as Othello says, he has enjoyed a reputation for calmness and prudence, yet he is like Cassio, unable to resist the temptation of the social evil of 'drink', and turns out a 'night brawler'. There is **Othello**, a brave, hardened soldier, with a free, open, trustful disposition, with a sensitive mind and conscience; but he lacks mental acuteness and equipoise and is therefore 'tenderly led by the nose as asses are' by the sharp but scheming brain of a villain. Here is **Cassio**, a capable officer, a highly finished courtier, with 'a smooth dispose' and a polished tongue, gay and light-hearted, but lacking moral courage to resist the tyranny of silly social conventions that go under the garb of 'sport' and 'entertainment'. There is, again, **Roderigo**, a 'wealthy, curled darling' of the Venetian wealthy class, highly sentimental and foolish, ready to waste his money after the object of his desire, even after knowing that that object is unattainable. Here stands **Desdemona**, fair, frank and simple, modest and yet heroic at times, constant in her love, 'the sweetest innocent that ever lived',—but foolish, childishly persistent, incapable of studying the importance of time, place and events, too charitable and credulous, and freely trusting one and all. There is **Emilia**

her maid, a woman of wordly experience and practical wisdom, attached to her mistress and constant in her loyalty, bold and vociferous in her denunciations, 'ready to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villanies.' We see also **Bianca**, a poor, public courtesan, following her lover even to the camp of war, shameless in her profession, loose-tongued, and yet possessing the virtues of common humanity that claim our pity and sympathy. Last, there is that demi-devil **Iago**, whose malignity has, like the plague, silently and seductively infected all who have come into contact with him.

There is thus presented to our gaze an epitome of the great world, a world in miniature, having almost every type of humanity,—good and bad, common and uncommon, vulgar and refined, arrogant and meek,—in fact from the highest to the lowest, with all orders and grades thrown in-between. Truly, Shakespeare's variety and diversity of characterization is as wonderful as that of Nature herself. As Ingersoll aptly remarks,—“Read one play, and you are impressed with the idea that the wealth of a god has been exhausted,and yet, the next play opens as fresh as the dewy gates of another day.” Hazlitt also says about this play,—

The picturesque contrasts of character in this play are almost as remarkable as the depth of the passion. The Moor Othello, the gentle Desdemona, the villain Iago, the good-natured Cassio, the fool Roderigo, present a range and variety of character as striking and palpable as that produced by the opposition of costume in a picture. *Their distinguishing qualities stand out to the mind's eye*, so that even when we are not thinking of their actions or sentiments, the idea of their persons is still as present to us as ever. These characters, and the images they stamp upon the mind, are the farthest asunder possible, the distance between them is immense. Yet the compass of knowledge and invention, which the poet has shown in embodying these extreme creations of his genius, is only greater than the truth and felicity with which he has identified each character with itself, or blended their different qualities together in the same story.

What a contrast the character of **Othello** forms to that of **Iago**! At the same time, the force of conception with which these two figures are opposed to each other is rendered still more intense by the complete consistency with which the traits of each character are brought out in a state of the highest finishing. The making *one black and the other white*, the one unprincipled and the other unfortunate in the extreme, would have answered the common purposes of effect, and satisfied the ambition of an ordinary painter of character. But Shakespeare has laboured the finer shades of differences in both, with as much care and skill as if he had to depend on the execution alone for the success of his design. On the other hand, **Desdemona** and **Emilia** are not meant to be opposed with anything like strong contrast to each other. Both are, to outward appearance, characters of common life, not more distinguished than women usually are by difference of rank and situation. Yet, there is the *diversity of their thoughts and sentiments* which are laid open to us. Their minds are separated from each other by signs as plain, and as little to be mistaken, as the complexion of their husbands.....

PART XIV.

Some Features of the Hero, Heroine, and the Villain.

OTHELLO

We have dealt with the characterization of all the dramatic persons, at some length, in the Critical and Analytical study, appended to each Act of the Play. But there are some aspects of the Hero, the Heroine, and the Villain of the tragedy which may be further elucidated or stressed here.

Othello and Brutus are mostly alike: In some respects, Othello comes nearer to Brutus than to any other tragic hero of Shakespeare. Both of the mare magnanimous, honest, open, and brave. Both are trustful, self-reliant and plain-sailing. Both take things at their face-value; they do not go deeper than the surface of men and things. Both are acknowledged to be 'noble' by friend and foe alike,—noble, in the sense that they are swayed by high principles of Honor, Duty, Rectitude, Public good. They are actuated by the purest of motives and the best of intentions. But Othello is invested with far more tragic issues. Unlike Brutus, he experiences a horrible awakening from his illusions,—an awakening which brings home to himself all his egregious, asinine blunders. As for his love, in all its fullness, fervour, intensity and complexity, it has all the power of a consuming tragic passion.

Othello's nobility and moral worth: The whole play abounds in ample testimony from all quarters, pointing to the nobility of the hero. The Moor has attained to the high position and authority in the Venetian State and Society, chiefly through his moral greatness,—the inestimable qualities of his head and heart,—the remarkable strength of his mind and will; the high degree of his self-control and forbearance; his pure and faultless character amidst a corrupt and corrupting social and sexual environment; his high notions of duty, discipline and honor; his inspiring confidence as a leader and commander; his cool heroism in the face of danger and death; his natural magnanimity of soul,—generous, trustful and loving; openly admitting his errors and faults, and feeling deeply sorry and penitent over them; disdaining injustice, meanness or low cunning; ready to act and sacrifice himself for noble objects. Not only the members of the Venetian Senate, not only Cassio, Montano, and other Military compatriots, but even the people of such extremely opposite types as Iago, the villain of the deepest dye, and as Desdemona, the model of maidenly sweetness and softness, of saintly simplicity and innocence;—one and all recognise and pay homage to his moral worth, to his greatness of soul, to 'his free, open, constant, loving, and noble nature.'

Othello was by nature open and trustful,—not suspicious:—Iago's dark hints and assertions are not believed at first. Othello demands clear and convincing proofs. It is only when he thinks he has

such proofs before him that *he gives way to jealousy and revenge*. What existed before only as a dormant germ now becomes a consuming passion. With the glowing power of his imagination, it soon spreads like wild fire.

The Question naturally arises,—How would most men, placed in similar circumstances, have acted? Even in the most civilized countries, men of high intelligence, culture and caution, but imbued, as they naturally are, with the elemental, ordinary human passions, would, on such evidence, have formed the same judgment as Othello did. Let us for a moment *leave aside the domestic sphere*, and look to the *political and religious fields of man's activities*. We find men and women suspected, condemned and punished cruelly on far more insufficient and unconvincing evidence than that Othello went upon. *History teems with examples*,—in all ages and climes,—of those persecuted and imprisoned on no better ground than mere suspicion. This will be clear to us, if we look at the number of *political suspects*,—those marked or kept down, or those deported and imprisoned without trial on no better grounds than suspicion or one-sided reports of interested officials in all despotic governments. Again, the same melancholy situation confronts us, if we turn our glance to the large number of *Freethinkers* or *Heretics*,—sacrificed in the supposed interests of religion, when religion dominated society and usurped the function of Government,—to the number of those persecuted and condemned to imprisonment, torture, or death, for *Heresy* (differences in religious beliefs, opinions and practices), on the most slender material,—the flimsy and one-sided reports of spies and official heresy-hunters who were paid and rewarded in proportion to the number of persons they informed against. It is all a question of *social psychology* or the *herd mind*, the power of suggestion, the backward state of Society, the ignorance, the low level of culture, the timid or ill-formed public opinion, the callous self-interest or self-love of the rich, powerful, and well-organised few, pitted against the many. In a nervous state of mind, both individuals and societies are easily thrown off their balance. They become easily perplexed, disturbed or wrought upon by fears and suspicions, real or fancied, that the safety of their interests, no matter however ill-gotten or indefensible they be, is endangered or threatened.

Here, the dearest and most precious interest or object of Othello's life was his love for Desdemona. That love was grounded on his belief in her beauty and charms, in her graces and accomplishments and, most of all, in her womanly purity and chastity,—‘the immediate jewel of a woman's soul.’ Such belief or conviction is now destroyed by what looks like a formidable and convincing evidence to Othello. This evidence is so dexterously concocted, presented, and made to appear so satisfactory and conclusive that, when he sees with his own eyes his love-token—

the handkerchief—in the hands of Bianca who throws it back to Cassio, it leaves, along with other circumstances artfully employed by Iago, absolutely no room for doubt in Othello's mind. His self-control, for which he was noted in the most dangerous situations, now gives way completely and he becomes an entirely changed man.

Not by nature jealous:—It is true that this tragedy is a tragedy of jealousy and revenge. But Othello was not by nature jealous. On the contrary, he was open-hearted, trustful, chivalrous and free,—free from the petty faults of envy, jealousy, suspicion, mean thoughts and practices. But once excited, made jealous and wrought upon, he becomes extremely perplexed and furious. *Do we not, all of us, carry in our blood the germs of our savage ancestry, of our primitive past conditions,—the germs of low and callous selfishness, cruelty, anger, jealousy, envy, revenge or vindictiveness?* In fact, “there is no vice in this world to which each one of us has not some natural pre-disposition. But, even in this, the Moor Othello is completely like most of us, inasmuch as his virtue cannot withstand formidable temptation. He loses his self-control, when all the props of his existence (love, honor and duty) have broken down” True, Othello's jealousy is at last successfully roused by a clever rogue. But this passion was not the fundamental part of his character. It lay dormant in him as it does in all of us. There is ample proof of this fact in the Play,—in Iago's praise of his free and open nature; in the testimony supplied by others; and more particularly by himself in the face of his impending end by suicide,—

Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice. then, must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely but too well;
Of one not easily jealous but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme.

We have also Dr. Ulrici's wise comment,—

I should like to see the man,—in Italy, in the wealthiest commercial city of the world, and at a time of the corruption of female beauty and morals, such as is described by Iago (in the 3rd Scene of Act I) to Roderigo, and again (in the 3rd Scene of Act III) to Othello, and reflected in Emilia's loose talk with her mistress, (Act IV. Sc. 3)—I should like to see the man as cleverly and cunningly belied by a friend and military comrade (believed to be thoroughly loyal, loving and honest)—the man who sees the token of his love in the hands of a young, handsome, amiable man, and whose doubts moreover are strengthened by the warm interest of his wife in her supposed lover,—I should like to see the man who would not under such circumstances become suspicious and give ear to the whisperings of the demon of jealousy. In fact, the man who would not find this to be an adequate proof of infidelity would have, in Arcadian simplicity, to consider women angels.....The passion of pain and anger about actual infidelity is as justifiable as that excited by any other

moral offence committed by the one we love.....It is Othello's misfortune to be inexpressibly belied and deceived. Hence, taken *objectively*, he does certainly *appear jealous*; but in himself, *subjectively*, he is not.

As to the feeling of revenge or vindictiveness: A spirit of revenge is generally excited in a man by some physical, mental, or moral loss, injury, hurt or offence caused to him by another. Othello is not at all vindictive or revengeful by nature. His worst foe, Iago certifies to his 'frank, loving and noble nature.' Of course, the feeling of revenge, as of anger, hate, and the like, may lie in our composition as a germ in a dormant state. We see the utter *absence of the spirit of retaliation or revenge in his conduct towards Brabantio*. The old Senator is most insulting and abusive to Othello, and yet the latter is forbearing, calm and respectful to him. It is only at a later stage when he is completely wrought upon by Iago, only after the props of his life—love and honour—are taken away, that retribution or the spirit of revenge springs up in his breast. He loved Desdemona with every fibre of his being. His love for her was his life, the essential part of his existence. In believing her lost, he loses himself. In believing her untrue, he becomes untrue to his own 'loving and noble nature.' As lamented by Desdemona herself,—

My Lord is not my Lord; nor should I know him,
Were he in favour as in humour altered.

Othello, a changed man under the baneful influence of jealousy and revenge
Othello now becomes a thoroughly changed man. This complete and sudden change in his nature becomes also the subject of Lodovico's astonishment and enquiry,—

Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in-all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce?

Even Othello is conscious of this change. When he says (in the Second Scene of Act V) in answer to Lodovico's question,—'Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?'

That's he that was Othello: here I am,

He means to say that he is no longer the same Othello as we all knew at one time, but quite a different man. And this change is "not (as Schlegel puts it in his antipathy) a relapse into his own brutal nature, but the destruction of his truly noble nature, the collapse of the glorious edifice into a desolate ruin, for 'foul toads to knot and gender in.' Accordingly, the just pain and rage which rouse his whole nature (his ardent feelings and excited imagination,) into a violent state of passion, are certainly now mixed with a feeling of revenge. But still his revenge has even a nobler motive than mere delight in the sufferings and ruin of its victim,"

But Othello is throughout prompted by Honour, not by Revenge: His love having gone, 'he clutches hold of the last possession he has kept afloat, his sole remaining property,—Honour.' This, at least, he intends to save for himself. His honour, as he thinks, demands the sacrifice of the lives of Desdemona and Cassio. *The idea of honour in those days, especially in Italy, inevitably required the death of the faithless wife, as well as the death of the adulterer* Othello, therefore, regards it as his duty to comply with these ideas. And, accordingly, it is no lie or extenuation when (in Act V, Scene 2) he calls himself 'an honourable murderer', doing 'naught in hate, but all in honour.'

The Eaves-dropping Scene: It is all very well for critics to spin fine theories from the cool atmosphere of their study. They say that Othello was guilty of meanness, when Iago persuaded him to play the eaves-dropper and overhear the conversation between Iago and Cassio, with reference to Bianca,—a reference which was misconstrued by the excited Moor as applying to Desdemona. But they must remember that Othello was not a god, a demi-god, a superman, but a human being, after all, with all the passions and emotions, the frailties and failings common to ordinary humanity. It is true he was a great man, possessing remarkable traits of character, brave, open, honorable, generous, intelligent, magnanimous; a good commander and organiser; a strict disciplinarian who always did his duty and exacted its observance from others rigorously; a man with a fine and just conscience. But he had,—as we all generally have—an impulsive and inflammable nature which, though he kept it well under control usually, broke out at times irresistibly under certain exceptional situations. When he was touched in the tenderest part of his life,—his honor as a soldier, or his love and constancy as a husband to Desdemona, or her fidelity and chastity as a wife to him,—he became very sensitive and capable of being easily inflamed. Iago knew this and used this knowledge to the fullest advantage for his own wicked purposes. It was thus that Iago wrought upon him and succeeded in perplexing him and in turning most of his virtues into their opposites. From his 'free, open, noble, and loving nature,' he fell, and became dark, suspicious, gullible and petty,—for what?—for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of his wife's infidelity. Overpowered by jealousy, he now becomes a spy,—a wretched creature.

For much less cause, for far less reasons, Governments, Statesmen and Politicians have not scrupled to resort to **spying, stealing, or secretly breaking open the postal correspondence** of their fellow-citizens under suspicion, when dealing with what they consider to be the hostile forces or purposes,—hostile to themselves or to their group, class or caste. They have been willing to do the spying by themselves when and where possible, or otherwise, by employing well-paid agents and officials to do it for them. In fact, it has become an

important, elaborate and well-organised system of espionage,—the dignified Criminal Intelligence Department—in every State or Government of this world,—not only in times of stress, danger or war, but even in peaceful civic life of everyday. This low, dark and dirty work is done or is caused to be done for the sole purpose of preserving their self-interest, their power, prestige and profit, though it is often disguised and camouflaged with high-sounding but misleading phrases. The only justification alleged for it is 'Necessity', or Self-preservation. If so, Othello too had the same necessity for spying or eaves-dropping, as it touched his very existence. His nature was such that he could not live with his honor and love soiled. He must be satisfied with nothing but the truth. Iago, he considers, is leading him on to know the truth. In his perplexity and confusion, he sees no other way to obtain it. Thus the passion of jealousy, once created and fully excited, has clouded his wits and spirits, and now drives him on to eaves-dropping. It is reprehensible but, as the world goes, excusable under the circumstances. We have Othello's pathetic and agonised lament on the subject,—

Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction ; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head ;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips ;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes ;
I should have found, in some place of my soul,
A drop of patience. * * *
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,
Where either I must live or bear no life,—
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up,—to be discarded thence !—
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in !

It was impossible for Othello to live without the two props of his life, Love and Honor. When both 'Love and Honor' are presented as tainted, to a man who bases his very existence on them, how could he have acted otherwise than as he has done? How would the generality of men—barring rare exceptions—under similar circumstances and imbued with the same social ideas and ideals about man's duties and obligations, have acted but as Othello has done?

His Ideas and Acts were the Product of his Environment: If culture had sufficiently advanced, it would have modified and amended the old barbarous ideas and beliefs about man's notions of honor, about his rights, duties and obligations towards woman. These were, as they generally are taken and learnt from Society. Primarily, they originated in man's brute nature,—his brute force, or superior physical strength. If humanitarian sentiments had prevailed, if social and sexual morality had advanced far enough to teach better ideas of even-handed justice between the sexes, Othello would not have taken the law in his hands and himself

executed justice on the suspected, guilty party; he would not himself have become the prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner of his wife. But those were rough and rude times. The higher culture is the child of later and more enlightened ages,—the child that is still in its infancy and hopes to grow under better conditions of general health and larger ethical social intercourse. Let us therefore be more charitable to the Hero and **judge him by the moral standards of his time and not by ours.** Remember that Shakespeare presents us a picture of Society as it was in the 16th century and before, and not as it should be, or would be, in the 20th or 30th century.

We have need to be occasionally reminded of the sway of **different ideas and notions of honor**,—(such as, an affair of honor, i. e. a duel; debt of honor; word of honor; maid of honor; &c.)—**and the insane practices** which came into vogue in consequence. What was the principle of **knightly honor** that was at one time so popular, and the practice of **duelling** that was based on it? The whole thing was utterly insane, stupid and savage in its origin and vogue. The insulted person was required or expected to meet his insulter in open combat. As Schopenhauer says,—

“**The Code of Honor** implies that the highest court, to which a man can appeal in any difference he may have with another on a point of honour, is the court of physical force, that is, of brutality. Every piece of revenge, rudeness or repression is, strictly speaking, **an appeal to brutality.** For, it is a declaration that intellectual strength and moral insight are incompetent to decide, and that the battle must be fought out by physical force,—a struggle in which the weapons are those of brute-force, and the decision is irrevocable. This is the well-known principle of ‘the right of might.’ This is called our ‘civilization’.....O, if we could only get rid of **this superstition about honour**,—the idea, that honor disappears when you are insulted and can be restored by returning the insult!.....How often it happens that the head which contains intelligence has to be pitted against the noddle which is empty of everything but narrowness and stupidity!.....But **from a moral point of view**, the right of the stronger is no more convincing than the right of the more skilful; and it is skill which is employed if you murder a man treacherously. **Might and skill are in this case equally wrong.** In a duel, for instance, both the one and the other come into play; for, a feint is only another name for treachery. If I consider myself morally justified in taking a man’s life, it is stupid of me to try first of all whether he can shoot or fence better than I.”... ..

The same is the case with the idiotic sentiment of National Honor. “As there is no court to appeal to, but the court of force; and as every nation must be prepared to defend its own interests, **the honor of a nation consists in establishing the opinion**, not only that it may be trusted (in its credit), but also that it is to be feared. An attack upon its rights (however roguish, thievish, or morally indefensible) must never be allowed to pass unheeded! It is a combination of civic and of knightly honour. The same idiotic thing again!.....”

If we feel inclined to look at the question from a larger ethical point of view, we might as well suppose a change of cases. Would not men, especially of the Oriental World, be shocked in their sensibilities, if they found the position of the parties reversed? If Desdemona, believing her husband faithless to her, had killed him by poison or by knife, how should we have felt then? What would have been our sentiments of male decorum, dignity, or justice, in that case? But impartial Justice should ever hold the scales even between the sexes, between the different groups and races. It is all a question of higher level of culture, refinement, civilization as we call it—of larger equity between the sexes, between the classes and masses, and between the different peoples of this earth. But the old barbarisms still survive amongst us in varied forms,—it will do us no good to be blind to them or to deny them,—in many of our false creeds and beliefs; in our low morals and ideals; in some of our unjust laws, customs and practices; in some of the pernicious conventions of society.

Judging Othello by the old ideals and standards, Coleridge has these pertinent and wise observations,---

Let me repeat that Othello does not kill Desdemona in Jealousy, but in a conviction forced upon him by the almost superhuman art of Iago,—such a conviction as any man would and must have entertained who had believed Iago's honesty as Othello did. We, the audience, know that Iago is a villain from the beginning; but, in considering the essence of the Shakespearean Othello, we must perseveringly *place ourselves in his situation and under his circumstances*. Then we shall immediately feel the solemn agony of the noble Moor. Othello had no life but in Desdemona.....The belief that she, his angel, had fallen from the heaven of her native innocence, brought a civil war in his heart. She is his counterpart.....

Jealousy does not strike me as the (main) point in his passion; I take it to be *rather an agony that the creature whom he had believed angelic*, with whom he had garnered up his heart, and whom he could not help still loving, *should be proved impure and worthless. It was a struggle not to love her.* It was a moral indignation and regret that virtue should so fall. As Othello himself says,—'But yet the pity of it, Iago!—O Iago! the pity of it, Iago!' In addition to this, his honor was concerned. Iago would not have succeeded but by hinting that his honour was compromised. *There is no ferocity in Othello; his mind is majestic and composed.*

Our Pity and Sympathy for Othello: Whatever be the other failings, such as the want of discernment which made him go upon feeble and flimsy grounds, the very fact that our heart dilates in full sympathy and pity for Othello at the spectacle of his suffering is proof positive of his many other good qualities. The nature of the Moor is noble, frank, open, confiding, tender and generous. But Iago has transformed him by his poisonous injections. And we now witness "the doubtful and dreadful conflict between contrary passions, the alternate ascendancy of different passions, the entire

and unforeseen change from the fondest love and most unbounded confidence to the tortures of jealousy and madness of hatred." These excite our pity and sorrow alike. Hazlitt speaks of Othello's falling a victim to the passion of jealousy in these words,—

It is in working his noble nature up to this extremity through rapid but gradual transitions; in raising passion to its height from the smallest beginnings and inspite of all obstacles; in painting the expiring conflict between love and hatred, tenderness and resentment, jealousy and remorse; in unfolding the strength and weakness of our nature; in uniting sublimity of thought with the anguish of the keenest woe; in putting in motion the various impulses that agitate this our mortal being, and, at last, in blending them in that noble tide of deep and sustained passion,—impetuous and majestic,—that 'flows on to the Propontic, and knows no ebb'; that Shakespeare has shown the mastery of his genius and of his power over the human heart.....Not only is the tumult of passion in Othello's mind heaved up from the very bottom of the soul, but even the slightest undulation of feeling is seen on the surface, as it arises from the impulses of imagination, or from the different probabilities maliciously suggested by Iago.

Coleridge, struck with the horrible nature of the tragic fate that befalls the Hero and Heroine in this Play, asks (in concluding his criticism of *Othello*) this puzzling question,—**Whom do we pity most, Othello or Desdemona?** On a superficial view, the answer will at once come,—Desdemona, 'the sweetest innocent that ever lived.' But, on a deeper analysis, our verdict should be in favour of Othello. Swinburne, the great poet, and other thoughtful critics are of the same opinion. Othello deserves our pity more than Desdemona, in view of the hard and prolonged mental struggle,—the continued suffering, agony and torture,—gone through by him both before and after her death. Desdemona's pain and suffering were more objective, temporary, less keen, being palliated by her sweetness and charity of temper. In Swinburne's words,—“Noble as are the most blessed conditions of the gentle Desdemona, he (Othello) is yet the nobler of the two; and has suffered more in one single pang than she could suffer in life or in death.”

The tenderest pity and pathos, the deepest pain and horror, the heart-rending lament and tears, excited by the tragic death of innocent Desdemona are, to some extent, similar to those called forth by the sad fate of Llewellyn's noble and faithful hound, Gelert, whom his loving master had killed under a mistaken belief of its guilt. The only difference in the two stories is that while Llewellyn survives the tragic death of his hound and lives in life-long anguish, repentance and tears, Othello, on discovering his befoolment and blunder, stabs himself, dies kissing his beloved and cursing himself.

DESDEMONA.

Her Beautiful Womanly Character:—Of all the characteristics of Desdemona, her ideal wifely love for her husband, her ivy-like clinging round the sturdy and majestic Othello, her almost childish innocence, and her generous and selfless instincts on behalf of others, stand out in bold relief. Her pleadings for Cassio are typical of her tender heart. Her reply to Othello that she has not lost the handkerchief, though a falsehood, appears to be prompted by her anxiety, not to save herself but to save her lord the worry that the knowledge of its loss might produce in him. This exceeding love for her Lord is amply borne out by her last words before she expires,—‘commend me to my Lord.’

Desdemona is almost sanctified in our eyes by her absolute purity, by her softness, sweetness and simplicity. Her love for Othello was her life. It was deep, genuine, beautiful, to say the least

Shakespeare has ennobled and sanctified womankind, by showing and stressing the magic power of her love and sympathy,—such love and sympathy as woman alone is capable of displaying or bestowing. On this aspect of Shakespeare’s mind, presenting us a truthful and yet beautiful portraiture of Female Character, we have the following testimony of three of the great Shakespearean critics:—

(1) De Quincey has these words,—

The possible beauty of the female character had not been seen, as in a dream, before Shakespeare called into perfect life *the radiant shapes of Desdemona, of Imogen, of Hermione, of Perdita, of Ophelia, of Miranda and many others*He introduced female characters, not as mere varieties or echoes of masculine characters, (as in Greece and Rome)—a Medea, or Clytemnestra, or a vindictive Hecuba.....but *female characters that had the appropriate beauty of female nature*; woman no longer grand, terrific and repulsive, but woman ‘after her kind,’—the other hemisphere of the dramatic world,—woman running through the vast gamut of womanly loveliness,—woman as emancipated, exalted, ennobled,.....woman the sister and co-equal of man,—no longer his slave, his prisoner, and sometimes his rebel. *The Roman stage*, at least the tragic stage, as is well known, was put out, as by an extinguisher, by *the cruel amphi-theatre*, just as a candle is made pale and ridiculous by day-light. Those who were fresh from the real murders of the bloody amphi-theatre regarded with contempt the mimic murders of the stage. Stimulation, too coarse and too intense, *had its usual effect in making the sensibilities callous*..... Therefore, in the great world of woman, Shakespeare stands, as the interpreter of the shifting phases of that lunar planet,—that lovely satellite of man,—not as the first only, not as the original, but as yet the sole authentic oracle of truth.....

(2) Equally true are the terse words of Hazlitt,—

It is the peculiar excellence of *Shakespeare’s heroines*, that *they seem to exist only in their attachment to others*. They are pure

abstractions of the affections. No one ever hit off the true perfection of the female character, the sense of weakness leaning on the strength of its affections for support, so well as Shakespeare.....

(3) Coleridge also says,—

In Shakespeare, all the elements of womanhood are holy. ..He saw the blessed beauty of woman's character. He knew that it arose, not from any deficiency, but from the more exquisite harmony of all the parts of the moral being, constituting one living total of head and heart. He has drawn it (woman's character), indeed, in all its distinctive energies of faith, patience, constancy, fortitude,—shown in all of them, as following the heart, which gives its results by a nice tact and happy intuition,—without the intervention of the discursive faculty (of reason),—which sees all things in and by the light of the affections, and errs, if it ever errs, in the exaggerations of love alone. In all the Shakespearean women, there is essentially the same foundation and principle; the distinct individuality and variety are merely the result of the modification of circumstances, whether in Miranda the maiden, in Imogen the wife, or in Katherine the queen.....

Narrow-visioned Critics and their Prejudices.—Certain schools of criticism have attempted to *read a kind of 'disproportion' in Desdemona's love for Othello*, in respect of age, nationality, manners and customs. They even go further and put it down as an outrageous blunder and unnatural rashness on her part to marry a Moor; and they say that, for her blunder and rashness, she amply deserved the tragic fate meted out to her. No interpretation seems to be more ludicrous, far-fetched and unnatural, and farther from the mind of the great poet. There is surely nothing strange in a young girl listening with admiration to the heroic deeds of a great man in battle-fields and war-campaigns. And when the narrator is himself the author of those deeds, it is quite possible for the young, virgin, romantic heart to cross the sphere of admiration and feel the voice of 'love' silently throbbing. Besides, Othello is a stately figure, well-featured, though a dusky Moor, of mature age,—not at all an old man—and quite capable of exciting the feelings of love in the heart of any maiden romantically disposed to Hero-worship. And when once Love springs up, it will not tarry to judge and discriminate between the different exigencies and expediencies of the situation. If it does so, it is not Love, worth the name, but a weak, wavering, petty, passion. At the birth of true love, one's whole system glows with new sensations, thrills and ecstasies. That divine passion will overleap all artificial boundaries and ignore all the prosaic disabilities imposed by one's country, clime, complexion, social custom or convention.

Desdemona's Grand and Glorious Achievement:—Desdemona is deservedly and lavishly praised for her womanly qualities, as a typical wife, as a paragon of womanly modesty, virtue and innocence. But she deserves a much higher praise for boldly overleaping the senseless barriers of national or racial prejudices and the patriarchal or parental

tyranny in matters of marriage, built up by a custom—bound Society. She trampled upon all these meaningless conventions and prejudices, and married Othello, a Moor, as her heart, struck with true love, prompted her to do. The end she finally met with, through the wicked devices and doings of a Devil, has nothing to do with her courageous determination in choosing and marrying an alien in defiance of Society's rigid, irrational and oppressive conventions. The cause of her untimely tragic death should dispassionately be sought for and found elsewhere. The devil would have still had the same stimulus for his malice in being deprived of the lieutenancy, and would have displayed his devilry against Othello and Desdemona, even if her father had fully approved of and consented to their marriage; nay even if there had been a white Italian General in place of Othello. Brabantio's approval or disapproval of the affair would hardly have affected the course of Iago's villainy.

But, for a young Venetian girl, to have made such a valuable and priceless contribution to the larger human solidarity, by merging all the petty considerations of caste, colour, creed, or nationality, in the broader, more concrete and living conception of that solidarity, is indeed a **grand and glorious achievement**. It is high time that Society learnt a lesson from Desdemona and sedulously fostered the freedom of larger social intercourse based on **kindred social virtues and true moral worth**. Such a lesson, learnt and assimilated by us, is calculated to build up the genuine federation of the world (so earnestly wished for and expressed by the great poets) by breaking down the narrow and intolerant customs or prejudices of race, country, creed, colour, caste, clan, or club. Charles Lamb remarks about this achievement of Desdemona,—

Nothing can be more soothing, more flattering to the nobler parts of our nature, than to read of a young Venetian lady of highest extraction, through the force of love, and from a sense of merit in him whom she loved, laying aside every consideration of kindred, country and colour, and wedding with a (dark-complexioned) Moor,—one who is represented much blacker owing to our prejudice or imperfect state of knowledge respecting foreign countries in those days compared with our own..... But the Moors are now well enough known to be by many shades less unworthy of a white woman's fancy. *It is the perfect triumph of virtue over accidents, of the imagination over the senses. She sees Othello's (true) colour in his mind.*

Desdemona's character and conduct may again be looked at from another angle of vision: If the critics try and suppress their racial pride and prejudice and look at the question from the standpoint of larger Justice, they will find more to admire, and less to blame, in Desdemona's conduct. She had attained majority and, as an adult member of society, had her own individual rights of self-determination. A tyrant or tyrannical society or institution would certainly deny these rights. But we are not here appealing to

tyrants but to just and reasonable men capable of taking an unbiassed view of the case. Has not a young woman, attaining majority, any rights of self-determination, as a young man is generally allowed to have? If not, why not? Are all the rights to be on the side of the men and of the parents, and not on that of the adult girls? Is it not a relic of the old barbarism which vests all power and despotism in the parents, as in old China where parental tyranny was for a long time supreme,—exercising the rights of life and death over both male and female children? Love, genuine love, sprang up in Desdemona's breast for Othello and it was deeply and genuinely reciprocated by Othello; both exchanged vows of eternal love and friendship and fidelity which culminated in their determination of marriage. Suppose that both informed Brabantio and asked for his consent to and blessing on their choice; that the father became too stubborn, unyielding and deaf to all their entreaties for wedlock; and further that he took cruel and oppressive measures to defeat their choice by wrongfully confining his child and preventing Othello from visiting the house,—what then? Had the lovers no further right or resource left to them? Were the parties then to be sacrificed on the altar of parental tyranny and fury without demur or complaint? Those that are inclined to say 'yes', go against all Equity, Justice and Reason. Such an answer is certainly revolting to our sense of fairness as it takes away the right of individual judgment, the freedom of choice and action, the birth-right of every adult in an enlightened and free society. The only remedy, then, in such a case against the blind fury and obstinacy of a parental tyrant is,—a stealthy elopement followed by secret marriage, as was resorted to by the parties themselves. The Duke and the Senate saw nothing wrong in such an elopement and marriage. Why should the critics then be so partial to Brabantio and unfair to the married couple?

IAGO

As for the character of Iago it is a **subject for profound psychological study**. We cannot do better than give the terse and beautifully-expressed summary of Hazlitt, which can hardly be improved upon,—

The character of Iago is one of the supererogations (super-excellences) of Shakespeare's genius. Some persons, more nice than wise, have thought this whole character unnatural, because his villainy is without a sufficient motive. Shakespeare, who was as good a philosopher as he was a poet, thought otherwise. He knew that **the love of power, which is another name for the love of mischief, is natural to man**. He would know this as well as or better than if it had been demonstrated to him by a logical diagram, merely from seeing **children paddle in the dirt or kill flies for sport**. Iago in fact belongs to a class of character common to Shakespeare and at the same time peculiar to him; whose heads are as acute and active as

their hearts are hard and callous. Iago is, to be sure, an extreme instance of the kind; that is to say, of **diseased intellectual activity** *with the most perfect indifference to moral good or evil*, or rather with a decided preference of the latter, because it falls more readily in with his favourite propensity, gives greater zest to his thoughts and scope to his actions.

He is quite or nearly as **indifferent to his own fate as to that of others**; he runs all risks for a trifling and doubtful advantage; and is himself **the dupe and victim of his ruling passion**—an insatiable craving after action of the most difficult and dangerous kind.

'Our ancient' is a philosopher, who fancies that a lie that kills, has more point in it than an alliteration or an antithesis; who thinks a fatal experiment on the peace of a family a better thing than watching the palpitations in the heart of a flea in a microscope; who plots the ruin of his friends as an exercise for his ingenuity, and stabs men in the dark to prevent *ennui*.

His gaiety, such as it is, arises from the success of his treachery; his ease, from the torture he has inflicted on others. He is an amateur of tragedy in real life: and instead of employing his invention on imaginary characters, or long-forgotten incidents, he takes the bolder and more desperate course of getting up his plot at home, casts the principal parts among his nearest friends and connections, and rehearses it in down-right earnest, with steady nerves and unabated resolution.....

The habitual licentiousness of Iago's conversation is not to be traced to the pleasure he takes in gross or lascivious images, but to his desire of finding out the worst side of everything. He has none of "the milk of human kindness" in his composition. His imagination rejects everything that has not a strong infusion of the most unpalatable ingredients; his moral constitution digests only poisons. Virtue or goodness, or whatever has the least "relish of salvation in it," is, to his depraved appetite, sickly and insipid.....

In the scenes where he tries to work Othello to his purpose, he is proportionably *guarded, insidious, dark and deliberate*. We believe nothing ever came up to the **profound dissimulation** and dexterous artifice of the well-known dialogue in the third act, where he first enters upon the execution of his design.

Iago : My noble lord,—

Oth : What dost thou say, Iago?

Iago : Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

Oth : He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?

Iago : But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.

Oth : Why of thy thought, Iago?

Iago : I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

Oth : O yes, and went between us very oft.

Iago : Indeed!

Oth : Indeed! ay, indeed!—Discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?

Iago : Honest, my lord?

Oth : Ay, honest!

Iago : My lord, for aught I know.

Oth : What dost thou think ?

Iago : Think, my lord !

Oth : (*Aside*) By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown,—

The stops and breaks, the deep internal workings of treachery under the mask of love and honesty, the anxious watchfulness, the cool earnestness, and, if we may so say, the passion of hypocrisy marked in every line, receive their last finishing in that inconceivable burst of pretended indignation at Othello's doubts of his sincerity,—

[To Self] O grace ! O Heaven defend me !
Are you a man ? have you a soul, or sense ?
God be wi'you ; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That liv'st to make thine honesty a vice !
Oh monstrous world ! Take note, take note. O world,
To be direct and honest, is not safe.—

[To Oth.] I thank you for this profit ; and, from hence
I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

GUIZOT, a French Writer and Critic, has also these sagacious remarks upon the character of Iago,—

Iago is not merely an irritated enemy, desirous of revenge, or an ordinary rascal, anxious to destroy a happiness which he cannot contemplate with satisfaction; but he is a cynical and *reasoning wretch, who has made for himself a philosophy of egoism, and a science of crime.* He looks upon men merely as instruments or obstacles to his personal interests. He despises virtue as an absurdity, yet hates it as an injury At the very moment when his crimes are about to cost him his life, he still enjoys with ferocious pride the evil which he had done, as if it were a proof of his superiority.....

Such is Iago, the villian of the deepest dye,—the sum of all human and inhuman villainies—the demi-devil, as Othello fitly calls him—the subtlest intellect, employed in the gratification of the basest impulses or emotions of a petty egoism,—prostituted to the service and satisfaction of 'miserable aims that end with self.' In portraying him, Shakespeare has shown how Evil is intermingled with Good in human society. As Dr Brandes remarks,—

Shakespeare has nowhere else shown Evil and Good in such immediate opposition,—bad and good human beings in such direct conflict with each other; and nowhere else has he so deliberately shunned the customary and conventional issue of the struggle,—the triumph of the good.....He means to show pitilessly what life is. "You see how this world goes," says Lear, (or Othello) in the play.

PART XV.

MORALS.

(TO BE DRAWN FROM 'OTHELLO.')

Critics have been variously moved and impressed by the Tragedy of Othello. And, naturally, various morals have been drawn from it. In those morals, most of the critics have but expressed or reflected their ingrained, tho' honest, prejudices and prepossessions, due to the subtle influences of their environment,—ancestry, race, custom, class, country or creed.

According to one class of critics, the moral to be drawn from this Play is,—(1) A warning to young maidens not to choose and marry any one against the will of their parents; as if parent-sanctioned marriages have always proved happy, peaceful or blessed in every way. A second school of critics and moralists would draw quite a different lesson,—(2) An Italian girl should not have married a man of an alien race, creed, country or complexion, and this, in spite of the fact that a common humanity, a world-wide education and civilization have been bringing closer together all races and countries, no matter how far apart and isolated they are or have been in the past. A third school, again, would moralise and say,—(3) Beware of the superior cunning of the white man against the black or brown. And this moral, they say, is well-illustrated by the white Iago,—brilliant, resourceful, intellectual, but utterly cold-hearted, selfish, self-loving, morally devilish and depraved, pitted against the black Othello,—chivalrous, brave, open and magnanimous. This is an equally stupid and shallow point of view to take, as cunning and villainy have no particular colour or country. There is yet another school which draws quite a different lesson, namely,—(4) The colour-bar, like the culture-bar or the creed-bar, or country-bar, stands as the natural barrier to the fusion of Europe and Asia. We are all familiar with the narrow-minded sentiment embodied in the couplet, which stands self-condemned,—

The East is East and West is West,
And ne'er the twain shall meet.

But they have already met, in spite of their petty differences and antagonisms, and become amicable and amiable in so many fields and walks of life.

Surely, the master-mind of Shakespeare, this universal brain, this cosmopolitan genius,—dealt with Humanity in general, irrespective of the narrow, artificial, unstable and fleeting accidents of a particular time, place, birth or situation. He dealt not with Italy, or Venice; not with Turkey or Moracco; not with the shifting, geographical frontiers or ethnological walls and boundaries of a particular race or country; not with Christians or Non-chris-

tians ; not with brown, black, or white colour ; but with elemental human emotions and passions, longings and desires,—Love, Faith or Credulity, Hatred, Pride of power or success, Revenge, Envy, Jealousy, Malice, Ambition, Greed, etc., etc., with a view to their right direction, discipline and education. Surely, these passions are not Italian or Venetian, Roman or Greek, English or French, European or Asiatic ; but belong to the whole of humanity in its various stages and phases of development. They should be curbed, tempered, trained, and directed into right channels. Shakespeare shows us the ever important need of a well-trained intelligence,—of calm thought, deep insight, mature judgment, rigorous, scientific scrutiny and sifting of evidence, weighing of probabilities, taking of precautionary measures in time ; in short, prudence, forethought, discernment, vigilance against the dark and devilish practices of a basely selfish world, against the powers of Evil that are so subtly mixed with those of Good in human society. Why did Othello fall ? Because he was deficient in these virtues ; because he was too open, trustful, and credulous ; because he that was ‘once so good’, is now ‘fallen in the practices of a damned slave.’ Why did Desdemona fall ? Because she was simple-minded, almost childish in her request and pleading, wholly deficient in prudence and discernment ; because she was trustful and generous to a fault, indiscreet and tactless in her ways and dealings with a world full of warring elements, of trouble and temptation, of art, trickery, and pretence.

How puerile, absurd and laughable are some of those scholarly critics who draw such stupid and shallow morals ? They are like the little Lilliputians of each country who cannot get over the bias of their land and blood. They reflect but the pride and prejudice of their Society, their Class, Caste, Land or ‘the mud-patriotism of locality.’ They see and study Shakespeare, the colossus of the world, and read their personal likes and dislikes into his works. With their low social ideas and ideals, with their petty pride and prejudice, they draw but mean, narrow and invidious lessons or morals to prevent human beings of kindred nature, quality and worth, from coming closer together sexually and socially, as they have done economically, commercially and culturally.

OTHELLO.

THE CHARACTERS,—REPRESENTED IN THIS DRAMA.

THE DUKE OF VENICE, President of the Republic.

BRABANTIO, a rich Senator, and father of Desdemona.

OTHER SENATORS.

GRATIANO, a noble Venetian and brother to Brabantio.

LODOVICO, a noble Venetian and kinsman to Brabantio.

OTHELLO, a noble Moor and brave General in the service of the Venetian State.

CASSIO, Othello's Lieutenant.

IAGO, Othello's Ancient. (Ensign or flag-bearer)

RODERIGO, a Venetian gentleman, and a suitor to Desdemona.

MONTANO, Ex-Governor of Cyprus,—now succeeded by Othello.

CLOWN, a Servant to Othello.

DESDEMONA, Daughter of Brabantio, now Wife to Othello.

EMILIA, Wife of Iago, and maid to Desdemona.

BIANCA, Mistress to Cassio.

SAILOR, MESSENGER, HERALD, OFFICERS, GENTLEMEN, MUSICIANS, AND ATTENDANTS.

SCENES ; for the First Act, in Venice.

SCENES ; for other Acts, in Cyprus, a seaport town.

(An outline of the story, Act by Act.)

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS IN

ACT I.

Roderigo, a suitor to Desdemona, learns on a particular night how, just then, she has eloped with Othello and married him in secret. So, he thinks that he has been fooled and cheated by Iago whom he had employed and paid liberally for helping him to win her. He meets Iago and blames him for his knowledge of the secret marriage. But Iago succeeds in pacifying him. He explains himself and tells him that he, too, hates Othello for having promoted Cassio to the office of Lieutenantcy rather than himself. Hence, both make a common cause, go in the dead of night, awaken Brabantio and inform him of his daughter's elopement with the Moor. Sorry and surprised, he searches for her, finds her missing, on which he goes out and arrests Othello, accusing him of having used magic or witchcraft in deluding his daughter. All of them then proceed to the Senate House.

The Duke and the Senate were then in meeting concerning an urgent and important State-matter, the attack of Cyprus by the Turks. Brabantio makes his complaint there, and the Duke hears both parties and finds out the truth from Othello who gives the whole story in quite a natural manner. When Desdemona is sent for, she too confirms Othello substantially. Finding that the marriage was the result of natural and mutual love, the Duke dismisses the case, and offers some conciliatory advice to the disappointed father.

He then appoints Othello straight-away as the General of the Venetian fleet for the relief of Cyprus, and commands him to proceed at once to the island to defend it against the enemy. Desdemona desires to accompany her husband, and the Duke sees no objection to her doing so. Othello thereupon arranges with Iago and Emilia for escorting her safely to Cyprus, while he, followed by Cassio, departs in advance,

Iago explains matters to Roderigo, exculpating himself and reviving Roderigo's hopes to win over Desdemona yet, tho' married to Othello.



Credulous fools and simpletons are ever exploited by clever rogues with smooth phrases and artful ways.

(Pic. 1.)

Act I. Scene I,—A street of Venice.

IAGO, THE VILLAIN, EXPLAINS HIMSELF AND PACIFIES RODERIGO.

ROD.—Tush!¹ Never tell me, I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago,—who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine—shouldst know of this.²

IAGO — Sblood,³ but you will not hear me.
If ever I did dream of such a matter, abhor me.

ROD —Thou told'st me thou did'st hold him in thy hate.

IAGO —Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him,⁴ and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place,
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance⁵
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion, non-suits my mediators.⁶
For, "Certes,"⁷ says he,—“ I have already chose my officer.”

And what was he? Forsooth, a great arithmetician,⁸
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,—
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife,⁹—
That never set a squadron¹⁰ in the field,
Nor the division of a battle¹¹ knows
More than a spinster;¹² unless the bookish theoric,¹³
Wherein the toged consuls¹⁴ can propose
As masterly as he,—

1. Tush! an interjection denoting anger. 2. This meaning the secret marriage of Othello. In their previous dealings, Roderigo (a suitor to Desdemona) employed Iago to help him in his suit and paid him for his services in advance. Roderigo now thinks that he has been fooled and cheated. 3. 'Sblood a briefer form of "God's blood", a profane expression used in swearing, it has now become quite obsolete or disused. 4. Off-capp'd to him saluted him (by taking off their caps) and conveyed their request and recommendation for me. 5. A bombast circumstance, etc., a bombastic circumlocution, an evasive speech full of big martial words and high-sounding phrases. 6. Non-suits my mediators. rejects the suit of my interceders, declines their request. 7. "Certes".—certainly, assuredly. 8. Arithmetician a clerk, good at figures, sneeringly so called and ridiculed for his promotion. 9. A fair wife Bianca, a loose woman, to whom he is not yet married, and hence 'almost damned'. 10. Squadron a body of troops (about 200 men), formed in a square: a division of a fleet or ships of war. 11. Division of a battle arrangement of a battle, or battle-array. 12. Spinster: an unmarried woman, one that spins, a mere girl. 13. Bookish theoric: theory, as opposed to practice; theory derived only from books. 14. Toged Consuls: Councillors or Civil Governors wearing togas or gowns as opposed to active Military Commanders; used contemptuously.

Mere prattle, without practice,—
 Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election :
 And I,—(of whom his eyes had seen the proof
 At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds
 Christian and heathen),—must be be-lee'd and calm'd¹
 By debtor and creditor²: this counter-caster,
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
 And I—God bless the mark!³—his Moorship's ancient.⁴

ROD.—By Heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

IAGO.—Why, there's no remedy;⁵ 'tis the curse of service,
 Preferment⁶ goes by letter⁷ and affection,
 And not by old gradation,⁸ where each second
 Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself
 Whether I, in any just term,⁹ am affined¹⁰
 To love the Moor.

ROD.—I would not follow him then.

IAGO.—O, sir, content you,
 I follow him to seive my turn upon him :
 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
 Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
 Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,¹¹
 That, doting on¹² his own obsequious bondage,¹³
 Wears out his time,¹⁴ much like his master's ass,
 For nought but provender;¹⁵ and, when he's old, cashier'd:¹⁶
 Whip me¹⁷ such honest knaves. Others there are
 Who, trimm'd¹⁸ in forms and visages¹⁹ of duty,
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
 Do well thrive by them and, when they have lined their coats,²⁰
 Do themselves homage:²¹ these fellows have some soul;²²

1. Be-lee'd and calm'd: nautical terms, meaning stopped, anchored for want of lee or breeze to fill the sails of a ship to force it onwards. 2. By debtor, etc: by a mere accountant, a keeper of debit and credit, an arithmetician, a caster of accounts; meaning that Cassio has outsailed him in his military career. 3. God bless the mark! a superstitious expression, used generally after praising a person or thing, in fear that harm will befall that person or thing; and so God is invoked to avert or undo the harm of the evil eye. 4. Ancient: ensign or flag-bearer. 5. There is no remedy: a common ejaculation, equal to another, 'there it is!'. 6. Preferment promotion. 7. Letter: i.e., letter of recommendation. 8. Gradation: rule or order established by ancient practice. 9. In any just term: justly, in any just respect. 10. Affined bound by any tie of affinity or kinship. 11. Knee-crooking knave: knee-bending, bowing, cringing slave or servant. 12. Doting on: excessively fond of, loving to excess. 13. Obsequious bondage slavery or restraint in which one follows his master servilely, or is pliant to excess. 14. Wears out his time, wastes or passes his time. 15. Provender. fodder, dry food. 16. Cashier'd. dismissed from office; discarded. 17. Whip me: show me (by a touch of the whip). 18. Trimm'd: decked or dressed. 19. Visages. looks, faces. 20. Lined their coats: lined (filled) their pockets. 21. Homage: originally, a symbolical acknowledgment made by a feudal tenant to his lord; reverence, respect; 22. Soul. spirit, courage, fire.

And such a one do I profess myself.
 For, sir, it is as sure as you are Roderigo,
 Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago :¹
 In following him, I follow but myself ;—
 Heaven is my judge,—not I for love and duty,
 But seeming so, for my peculiar ² end :
 For, when my outward action doth demonstrate
 The native act and figure of my heart
 In compliment extern³, 'tis not long after
 But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve⁴
 For daws to peck at: ⁵ I am not what I am⁶.

1. Were I the Moor, etc., : if I were in the Moor's place, I should be quite another man than I am. 2. Peculiar: particular. 3. In compliment extern: in external compliment, manners, show, or outward form. The sense of the whole passage is, "when I become such a fool as to make my external behaviour a true index of my inward thought and purpose, I shall soon proceed to the further folly of putting my heart outside, for other fools to sport with." 4. I will wear my heart, &c. : a metaphor taken from the custom of wearing ladies' favours on the sleeve, as a defiance to any impertinent person who might challenge or question them. 5. For daws to peck at. for doves, gulls or fools to question or criticize. 6. What I am: what I seem.

Iago and Roderigo plot and go to Brabantio's house at night and, their shouts, awake and incite Brabantio against Othello.



Beware of the advice of selfish persons, masquerading as true friends.

(Pic. 2.)

IAGO AND RODERIGO GO AT NIGHT AND AWAKE BRABANTIO.

ROD.—What a full fortune¹ does the thick lips owe,²
If he can carry't thus!

IAGO.—Call up her father,
Rouse him make after him,³ poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen;
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't
As it may lose some colour.⁴

ROD.—Here is her father's house, I'll call aloud.

IAGO.—Do, with like timorous⁵ accent and dire yell
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities⁶.

ROD.—What, ho! Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

IAGO.—Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter and your bags! thieves!.....

BRA.—What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

ROD.—Signior, is all your family within?

IAGO.—Are your doors lock'd?

BRA.—Why, wherefore ask you this?

IAGO.—'Zounds! Sir, you're robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst⁷, you have lost half your soul,
Even now, very now, an old black ram⁸
Is tupping⁹ your white ewe. Arise, arise!
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil¹⁰ will make a grandsire of you.¹¹ Arise, I say.

BRA.—What, have you lost your wits?

ROD.—Most reverend Signior, do you know my voice?

BRA.—Not I: what are you?

ROD.—My name is Roderigo.

BRA.—The worse welcome.

I have charged thee not to haunt about¹² my doors.

1. Full fortune over-flowing good fortune 2. Owe own, possess; the sense of the whole passage is,—how fortunate will the thick-lipped Moor be, if he can hold out against such practice! 3. Make after him: pursue, run after. 4. Plague him ... colour:—tho' he is living in a blessed condition of peace and joy, pester him with, or make him a victim of, petty annoyances as may diminish his joy. 5. Timorous: terrifying, fearful. 6. The Prose order here is: 'As when the fire, by (thro') night and negligence, is spied (seen) etc. 7. Burst: broken. 8. Black ram: meaning Othello. 9. Tupping; covering. 10. The Devil: always represented as black, (Othello's colour.) Note here that all the filthy, vulgar and indecent expressions come from the mouth of Iago, not of Roderigo. 11. Grand-sire; the meaning is that Brabantio will have grand children born to his daughter through Othello. 12. Haunt about: frequent.

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
 My daughter is not for thee, and now, in madness,
 Being full of supper and distempering draughts,¹
 Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
 To start my quiet But thou must needs be sure
 My Spirit and my Place have in them power
 To make this bitter to thee.

ROD.—Patience, good sir.

BRA.—What ! Tell'st thou me of robbing ? This is Venice ;
 My house is not a grange²

ROD.—Most grave Barbantio,
 In simple and pure soul I come to you.

IAGO.—'Zounds.³ Sir, you are one of those that will not serve God,
 if the devil bid you Because we come to do you service and you
 think we are ruffians, you'll have your daughter covered with
 a Barbary horse,⁴ you'll have your nephews⁵ neigh to you,⁶
 you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for Germans

BRA.—What profane⁷ wretch art thou ?

IAGO.—I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the
 Moor are now making the beast with two backs.⁸

BRA.—Thou art a villain

IAGO.—You are—a senator⁹

BRA.—This thou shalt answer ; I know thee, Roderigo.

ROD.—Sir, I will answer any thing. But, I beseech you,—
 If't be your pleasure and most wise consent,
 As partly I find it is, that your fair daughter,
 At this odd-even¹⁰ and dull¹¹ watch o' the night,
 Transported with no worse nor better guard
 But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,¹²
 To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor ;
 If this be known to you, and your allowance,—
 We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs ;
 But, if you know not this, my manners tell me
 We have your wrong rebuke.

1. Distempering draughts : intoxicating drinks. 2. Grange : a lonely farm or house where a robbery might easily be committed. 3. 'Zounds : a brief form of 'God's wounds'; used as an oath. An exclamation denoting anger or surprise. 4. Barbary horse. a black animal, meaning Othello. 5. Nephews : grandsons or any lineal descendents. 6 Neigh to you ; as colts do to their mothers, the mares. 7. Profane . course, foul-mouthed. 8. With two backs: with two bodies joined. 9. The dash after 'you are' is intended for the word 'villain'; but Iago makes a pause and says 'Senator' instead, probably in a lower tone. 10. Odd-even : it means the interval between twelve at night and one in the morning; that is to say, it is a toss up, odd or even, whether it is night or morn. 11. Dull. dead, lifeless. 12. Gondolier. boatman in charge of a boat plying for hire. The gondoliers generally conveyed persons from one place to another in Venice ; and so they were supposed to know all intrigues ; and they made profits out of the secrets of society.

BRA.—Strike on the tinder,¹ ho!
Give me a taper!² call up all my people!
This accident is not unlike my dream.
Belief of it oppresses me already. Light, I say, light!

IAGO.—Farewell; for, I must leave you.
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced,—as, if I stay, I shall,—
Against the Moor: for, I do know the State,
However this may gall him with some check,³
Cannot with safety cast⁴ him; for he's embarked
With such loud⁵ reason to the Cyprus wars,—
Which even now stand in act,—that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom⁶ they have none
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,⁷
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag⁸ and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary⁹ the raised search;¹⁰
And there will I be with him So, farewell. [Exit Iago.]

Brabantio comes down with servants and torches.

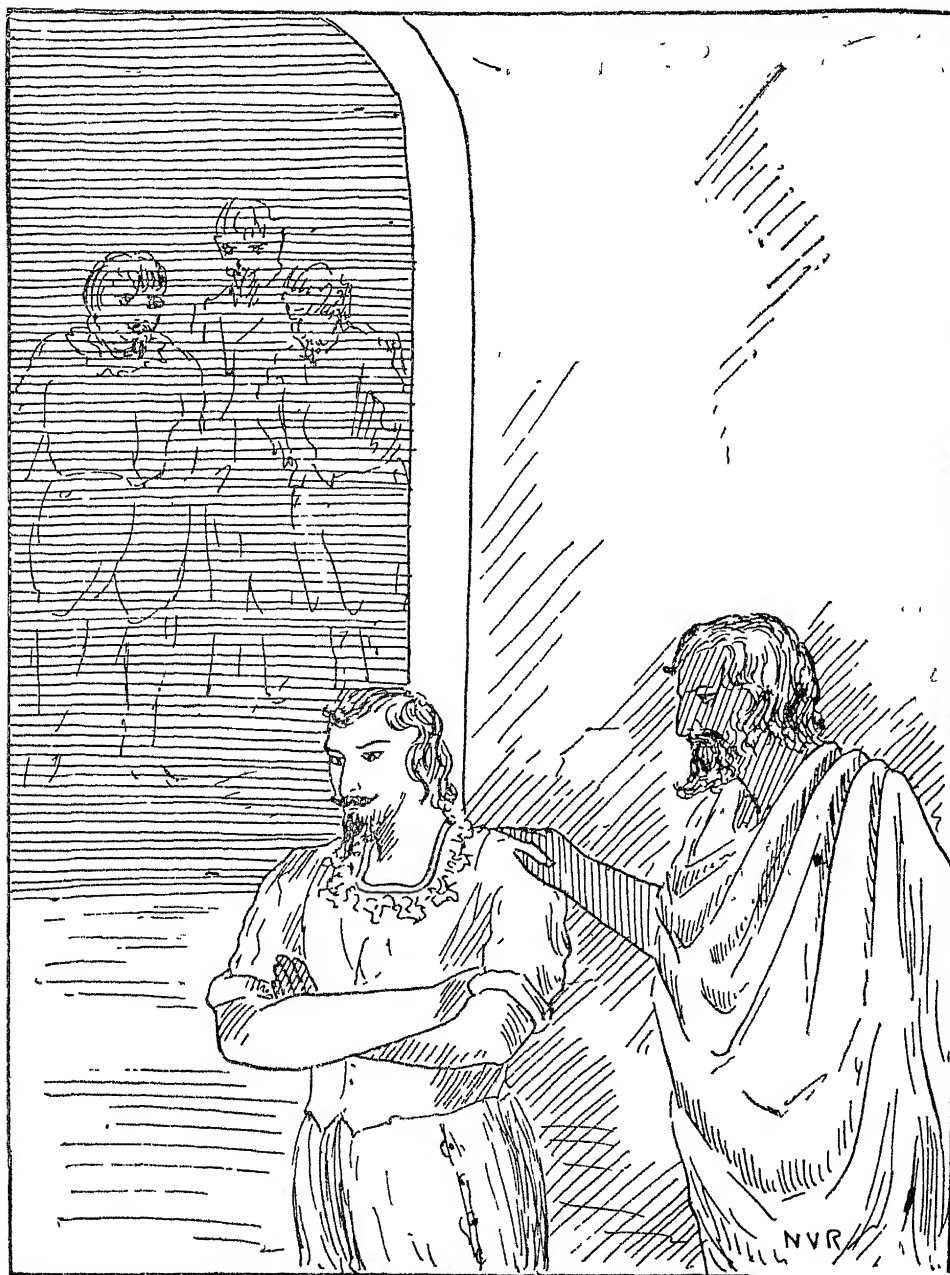
BRA.—It is too true an evil. gone she is; and what's to come of my despised time is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo, where didst thou see her? O, unhappy girl! With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father? How didst thou know 'twas she? O, she deceives me, past thought. What said she to you? Get more tapers! Raise all my kindred! Are they married, think you?

ROD.—Truly, I think they are.

BRA.—O Heaven! How got she out? O treason of the blood! Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds by what you see them act. Is there not charms by which the property of youth and maidhood¹¹ may be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo, of some such thing? Call up my brother. O, would you had had her!¹² Some one way, some another

1. *Tinder*: inflammable articles like matches. 2. *Taper*: candle-light.
3. *Check*: rebuke. 4. *Cast*: discard or do without. 5. *Loud*: eloquent, urgent.
6. *Fathom*: depth of intellect and power. 7. *Hell-pains*: torments of hell.
8. *Flag*: banner or sign. 9. *Sagittary*: a prominent official building attached to an arsenal where officers of Othello's rank had official apartments or transacted their business. 10. *The raised search*: the organized search-party.
11. *Maidhood*: maidenhood, virginity. 12. *Would.....her*; wish that you had married her.

Iago worms himself into the goodwill of Othello by artful ways and professions of friendship.



Very oft a sweet tongue hides a slimy heart.

(Pic. 3.)

IAGO, WORMING HIMSELF INTO OTHELLO'S GOOD-WILL.

Scene 2—Another street in Venice.

IAGO:—Though, in the trade of war¹, I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff² o' the conscience
To do no contriv'd³ murder, I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service; nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerked him⁴ here under the ribs.

OTH:—'Tis better as it is

IAGO:—Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy⁵ and provoking terms
Against your Honour,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him.

But, I pray you, Sir,
Are you fast married? For, be assured of this,
That the magnifico⁶ is much beloved,
And hath, in his effect,⁷ a voice potential⁸
As double as the Duke's. he will divorce you,
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance⁹
The law (with all his might to enforce it on)
Will give him cable.¹⁰

OTH:—Let him do his spite:
My services, which I have done the Signiory,¹¹
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,—
Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate,—I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege,¹² and my demerits¹³
May speak, unbonneted¹⁴ to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd. For, know, Iago,
But that¹⁵ I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused¹⁶ free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth.¹⁷ But, look! What lights come yond?

IAGO:—Those are the raised¹⁸ father, and his friends:
You were best go in.¹⁹

1. Trade of war · course of war. 2. Stuff: substance, essence. 3. Contriv'd. plotted, pre-arranged premeditated. 4. Yerked him struck or kicked suddenly: or jerked him (i. e. Rodenigo) 5. Scurvy mean, low, vile, offensive: 6. Magnifico the chief men of Venice were called Magnificoes or grantees; here meaning Brabantio. 7. Effect: influence. 8. Potential powerful. 9. Grievance grievous burden 10. Cable rope, (i. e.) permit him. 11. Signiory. the territory over which the Duke and his council hold jurisdiction. 12. Siege. seat, throne. 13. Demerits merits, the term was used by Shakespeare in both senses, merits or good deeds or services, and also demerits or misdeeds. 14. Unbonneted without the bonnet (i. e.) without the addition of patrician or senatorial dignity, the bonnet, or the peculiar head-covering, as well as the toga being the symbols of such dignity. 15. But that were it not that, or if I did not. 16. Unhoused: not tied to a household or family. 17. The sea's worth: the pearls and other riches of the sea. 18. Raised. awakened, 19. You,.....in: it were best; it would be best.

OTH.—Not I; I must be found:

My parts, my title and my perfect¹ soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO.—By Janus!² I think, no. [Enter Cassio, &c.]

OTH.—The servants of the Duke, and my lieutenant!
The goodness of the night upon you,³ friends!
What is the news!

CAS.—The Duke does greet you, General,
And he requires your haste-post-haste⁴ appearance,
Even on the instant.

OTH.—What is the matter, think you?

CAS.—Something from Cyprus, as I may divine: it is a business of
some heat⁵ the galleys have sent a dozen sequent⁶ messen-
gers, this very night, at one another's heels; and many of the
Consuls raised⁷ and met, are at the Duke's already. you have
been hotly call'd for; when, being not at your lodging to be found,
the Senate hath sent about three several quests⁸ to search you out.

OTH.—'Tis well I am found by you. I will but spend a word here
in the house, and go with you. [Exit.]

CAS.—Ancient, what makes⁹ he here?

IAGO.—Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack;¹⁰
If it prove lawful prize, he's made¹¹ for ever.

CAS.—I do not understand.

IAGO.—He's married.

CAS.—To who?¹²

[Re-enter Othello.]

IAGO.—Marry, to—Come, Captain, will you go?

OTH.—Have with you.¹³

CAS.—Here comes another troop to seek for you.

IAGO.—It is Brabantio: General, be advised;¹⁴

He comes to bad intent.¹⁵ [Enter Brabantio & others with torches.]

OTH.—Holla! stand there!

ROD.—Signior, it is the Moor.

1. Perfect: fully prepared for good or ill, for joy or grief; calm or well-balanced.
2. Janus: a mythological god (among the Romans) who protected all
'Janue' or gates in Rome, represented as having a double head that looked both
ways. And how fit it is to make the double-dealing Iago swear by Janus who has
two faces: Iago does so, because he glories in his duplicity. 3. The goodness,
etc.: good-night. 4. Haste post-haste: these words were usually written on
dispatches sent express; urgent, peremptory. 5. Heat: of warm interest,
urgency. 6. Sequent: following one another. 7. Raised: called out, awaked.
8. Quests: search-parties. 9. Makes: does. 10. Boarded a land carack: seized
a rich booty. Caracks were vessels sent to Brazil and the East Indies for rich
merchandise. 11. He's made: made prosperous, successful. 12. To who?:
to whom? Cassio's ignorance here seems to be affected, to keep his friend's
secret till it became publicly known. 13. Have with you: I agree with you,
come along. 14. Be advised: be cool and careful. 15. To bad intent: with
malicious purpose.

BRA.—Down with him, thief ! [They draw on both sides.]

IAGO.—You, Roderigo ! come, sir, I am for you.

OTH.—Keep up your bright swords; for, the dew will rust them !¹
Good Signior, you shall more command² with years
Than with your weapons.

BRA.—O, thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd³ my daughter ?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her, for, I'll refer me⁴
to all things of sense⁵, if she in chains of magic were not bound,
whether a maid so tender, fair and happy, so opposite to marriage
that she shunn'd the wealthy curled darlings⁶ of our nation,
would ever have, to incur a general mock,⁷ run from her guardage⁸
to the sooty⁹ bosom of such a thing as thou,—to fear, not to delight.¹⁰
Judge me the world,¹¹ if 'tis not gross in sense¹² that
thou hast practised¹³ on her with foul charms, abused her delicate
youth with drugs or minerals that weaken motion.¹⁴ I'll have't
disputed on;¹⁵ 'tis probable, and palpable to thinking I therefore
apprehend and do attach¹⁶ thee for an abuser of the world, a
practiser of arts, inhibited¹⁷ and out of warrant.¹⁸ Lay hold upon
him: if he do resist, subdue him at his peril.

OTH.—Hold your hands both you of my inclining and the rest;¹⁹
were it my cue²⁰ to fight, I should have known it without a prompt-
er. Where will²¹ you that I go to answer this your charge? * *

1ST. OFF.—The Duke's in council, and your noble self, I am sure,
is sent for.

BRA.—How ! The Duke in council in this time of the night ? Bring
him away. mine's not an idle cause the Duke himself, or any
of my brothers of the State, cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere
their own; for, if such actions may have passage free,²² bond-
slaves and pagans²³ shall our statesmen be.²⁴

1. The dew : because it was night. Othello means that their swords will get spoiled more by exposure to the dew than by use against him. 2 More command, etc command respect from me more by your age than by your threats. 3. Stowed placed, hid or concealed. 4. Refer me refer myself, (i. e.) appeal to, consider or cast my eyes on. 5 Things of sense things easily perceivable by the senses. 6. Curled darlings fashionable or elegant favourites or fops; a curl is a love-lock or curled hair,—the badge of a suitor. 7 A general mock: a public scorn or ridicule. 8. Guardage: guardianship. 9. Sooty: coal black; 10. To fear etc. to terrify, that is to say, more terrifying than delighting; referring to Othello. 11. Judge me the world let the world judge me. 12. Gross in sense: easily discernable, palpable, 13 Practised plotted. 14. Weaken motion: impair volition or will power, or sense such as sight, etc., 15. Disputed on: threshed out or argued in court. 16. Attach a legal term, for 'arrest.' 17. Inhibited: forbidden, checked, restrained 18. Out of warrant unwarranted or not sanctioned. 19. Both you, etc., both those that are favourably inclined (i. e. friends) to me and those that are not. 20. Cue: motive, hint; originally, a theatrical term meaning a tail-word, a catch-word. 21. Will. wish or desire. 22. Passage free: may be permitted to pass freely, unchecked. 23 Pagans used contemptuously, applied to Non-Christians. 24. If such actions. statesmen be. if such mixed marriages between Christians and Non-Christians are permitted without check, then the future rulers of the Venetian State will no longer be noble-men of pure Christian descent, but Non-Christians and children of slaves. The word 'Slaves' refers to Othello's narration of his having been sold to slavery once.

Othello, at Brabantio's house, used to recount his adventures which first excited the admiration, and eventually the love, of Desdemona,



How deeds of Self-sacrifice, Suffering and Heroism touch human hearts! . . .

(Pic. 4)

OTHELLO EXPLAINS THE ORIGIN OF HIS LOVE-AFFAIR WITH DESDEMONA
AT BRABANTIO'S HOUSE.

OTH.—Her father loved me, oft invited me, still¹ questioned me the story of my life from year to year,—the battles, sieges, fortunes, that I have pass'd² I ran it through,³ even from my boyish days to the very moment that he bade me tell it ; wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,⁴ of moving⁵ accidents by flood and field ; of hair-breadth⁶ 'scapes¹ the imminent⁷ deadly breach , of being taken by the insolent⁸ foe and sold to slavery ; of my redemption thence and portance⁹ in my travels' history, wherein, of antres¹⁰ vast and deserts idle,¹¹ rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven, it was my hint¹² to speak,—such was the process , and of the Cannibals that each other eat, the Anthropophagi,¹³ and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders.

This to hear, would Desdemona seriously incline , but, still, the house-affairs would draw her thence , which ever as she could with haste dispatch, she'd come again, and with a greedy ear¹⁴ devour up my discourse: which I observing took once a pliant¹⁵ hour, and found good means to draw from her a prayer of earnest heart, that I would all my pilgrimage¹⁶ dilate,¹⁷ whereof by parcels¹⁸ she had something heard but not intentively.¹⁹ I did consent ; and often did beguile her of her tears²⁰ when I did speak of some distressful stroke that my youth suffer'd. My story being done, she gave me for my pains a world of sighs.²¹ She swore, in faith, "'twas strange," "'twas passing strange;" "'twas pitiful;" "'twas wondrous pitiful." She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd that Heaven had made her²² such a man²³ She thank'd me; and bade me, if I had a friend that loved her, I should but teach him how to tell my story, and that would woo²⁴ her. Upon this hint I spake she loved me for the dangers I had pass'd, and I loved her that she did pity them.....

1. Still again and again. 2. Pass'd: passed through or experienced. 3. Ran it through, recounted rapidly. 4. Chances, events that were unexpected. 5. Moving touching or terrible. 6. Hair-breadth; narrow or by a hair's breadth. 7. Imminent; near, impending or threatening to occur. 8. Insolent; reckless or callous, proud, haughty and insulting. 9. Portance; conduct, bearing or behaviour (after redemption from his slavery). 10. Antres caves. 11. Idle useless, barren. 12. Hint; habit. 13. Anthropophagi; men-eaters, the term was first applied to the people of Scythia; then, in metaphor, to others. 14. With a greedy ear. eagerly. 15. Pliant yielding; and hence, suitable, convenient. 16. Pilgrimage, travels. 17. Dilate; enlarge upon or relate at large. 18. By parcels' in bits or by parts. 19. Intentively, attentively, and therefore fully. 20. Did beguile her of her tears, unconsciously caused or induced her to shed tears. 21. A world of sighs an immense quantity of sighs; (i.e.) she sighed much out of pity. 22. Her, for her. 23. Such a man; such a man for her husband. 24. Woo, not only court, but win.

A meeting in the Council Chamber: The Duke and the Senators are debating about the Turkish Fleet, etc.



Wisdom and Unity at times dawn in the face of a Common Danger

(Pic. 5.)

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER; THE DUKE AND SENATORS ARE DEBATING ABOUT
THE TURKISH FLEET.

DUKE:—There is no composition¹ in these news,
That gives them credit.²

1st SEN:—Indeed, they are disproportion'd,³
My letters say,—a hundred and seven galleys.⁴

DUKE:—And mine, a hundred and forty.

2nd SEN.—And mine, two hundred... ..Yet do they all confirm
A Turkish Fleet, and bearing up to⁵ Cyprus

(Enter a Sailor.)

SAIL.—(Within) What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!

OFF.—A messenger from the galleys.

DUKE.—Now, what's the business?

SAIL.—The Turkish preparation makes for⁶ Rhodes;
So was I bid report here to the State
By Signior Angelo.

DUKE.—How say you by⁷ this change?

1st SEN.—This cannot be, by no assay of reason.⁸

'Tis a pageant⁹ to keep us in false gaze.¹⁰

When we consider the importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,

.... ..
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful
To leave that latest, which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain,
To wake and wage¹¹ a danger profitless.

DUKE—Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes

(Enter a Messenger.)

MESS.—The Ottomites, reverend and gracious Signiors,
Steering with due course towards the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them¹² with an after fleet.

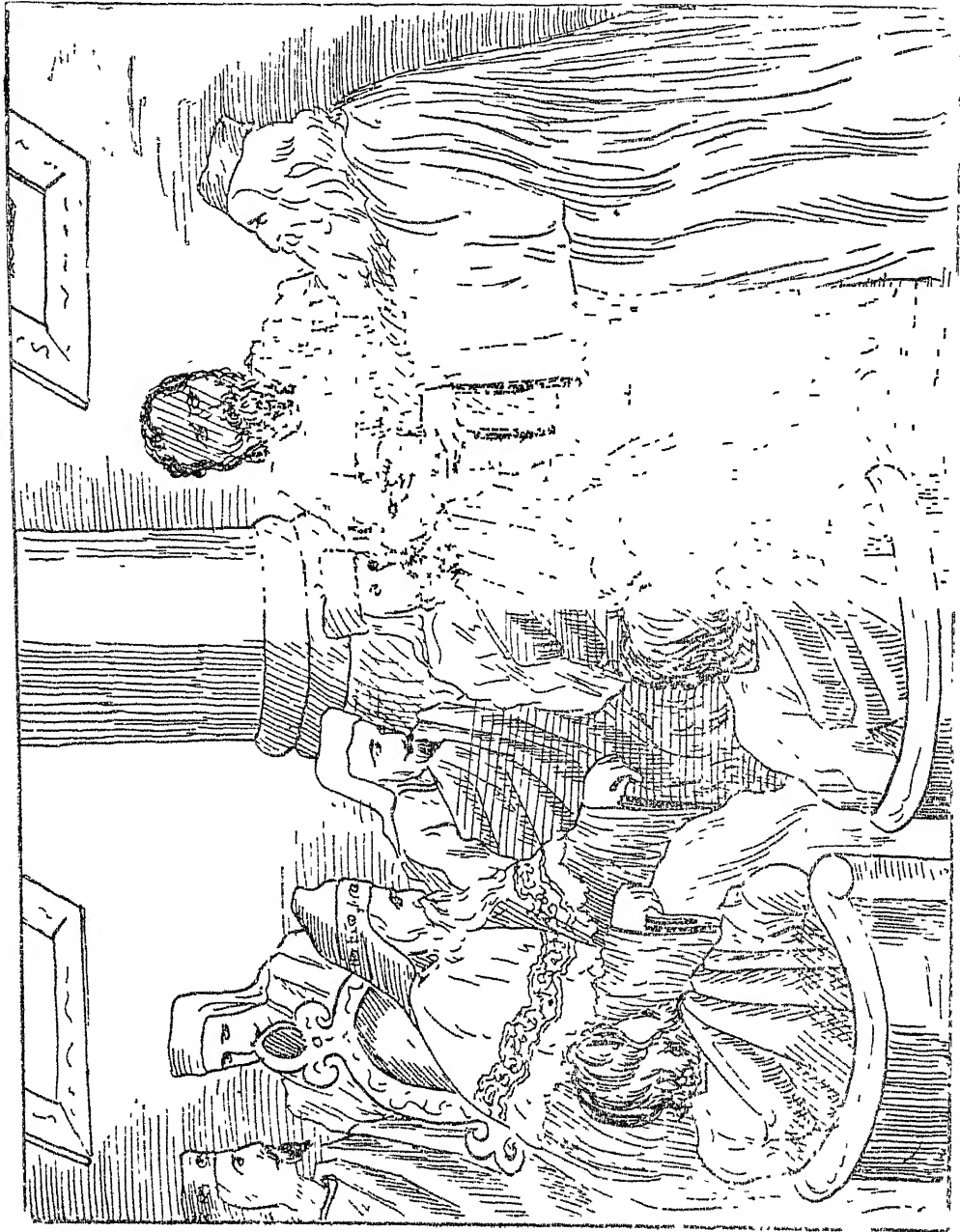
1st SEN.—Ay, so I thought. How many, as you guess?

MESS.—Of thirty sail and now they do re-stem¹³

Their backward course¹⁴ bearing, with frank appearance,
Their purposes toward Cyprus.¹⁵ Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,¹⁶
With his free duty¹⁷ recommends¹⁸ you thus.
And prays you to believe him.¹⁹

1, Composition agreement. 2 That gives them credit that makes them credible or true. 3. Disproportion'd: different, discrepant. 4. Galleys boats, navigated with sails and oars. 5 Bearing up to. leading or taking her course to. 6. Makes for sails or sets in the direction of 7 By of 8. By no assay of reason by no test or effort of reason. 9 Pageant: show, delusion 10. Gaze expectation. 11. To wake and wage. to create and wager, risk or attempt 12 Injointed them. joined or allied themselves 13 Re-stem. redirect. 14. Their backward course their course backward 15. Bearing . . Cyprus indicating openly their intentions to proceed against Cyprus. 16. Servitor; servant. 17 Free duty. duty rendered freely or ungrudgingly, duty felt earnestly and sincerely. 18 Recommends: advises or informs 19 To believe him; not to doubt the truth of his intelligence or news

Brabantio arrives at the Council Chamber to make a personal complaint against Othello



How oft Personal Interest swallows up Public Interest !

(Pic. 6.)

BRABANTIO'S PERSONAL COMPLAINT AGAINST OTHELLO

DUKE:—Valiant Othello, we must straight¹ employ you
Against the general enemy, Ottoman.

(To Brabantio) I did not see you, welcome, gentle Signior,
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.²

BRA:—So did I yours³ Good your grace, pardon me,
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
Hath raised me from my bed; nor doth the general care
Take hold on⁴ me,⁵ for, my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate⁶ and o'erbearing⁷ nature
That it engulfs⁸ and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.⁹

DUKE:—Why, what's the matter?

BRA:—My daughter! O, my daughter!

ALL:—Dead?

BRA:—Ay, to me,
She is abused,¹⁰ stol'n from me and corrupted¹¹
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks,¹²
For nature so preposterously¹³ to err,—
Being not deficient, blind or lame of sense,—
Sans¹⁴ witchcraft could not¹⁵

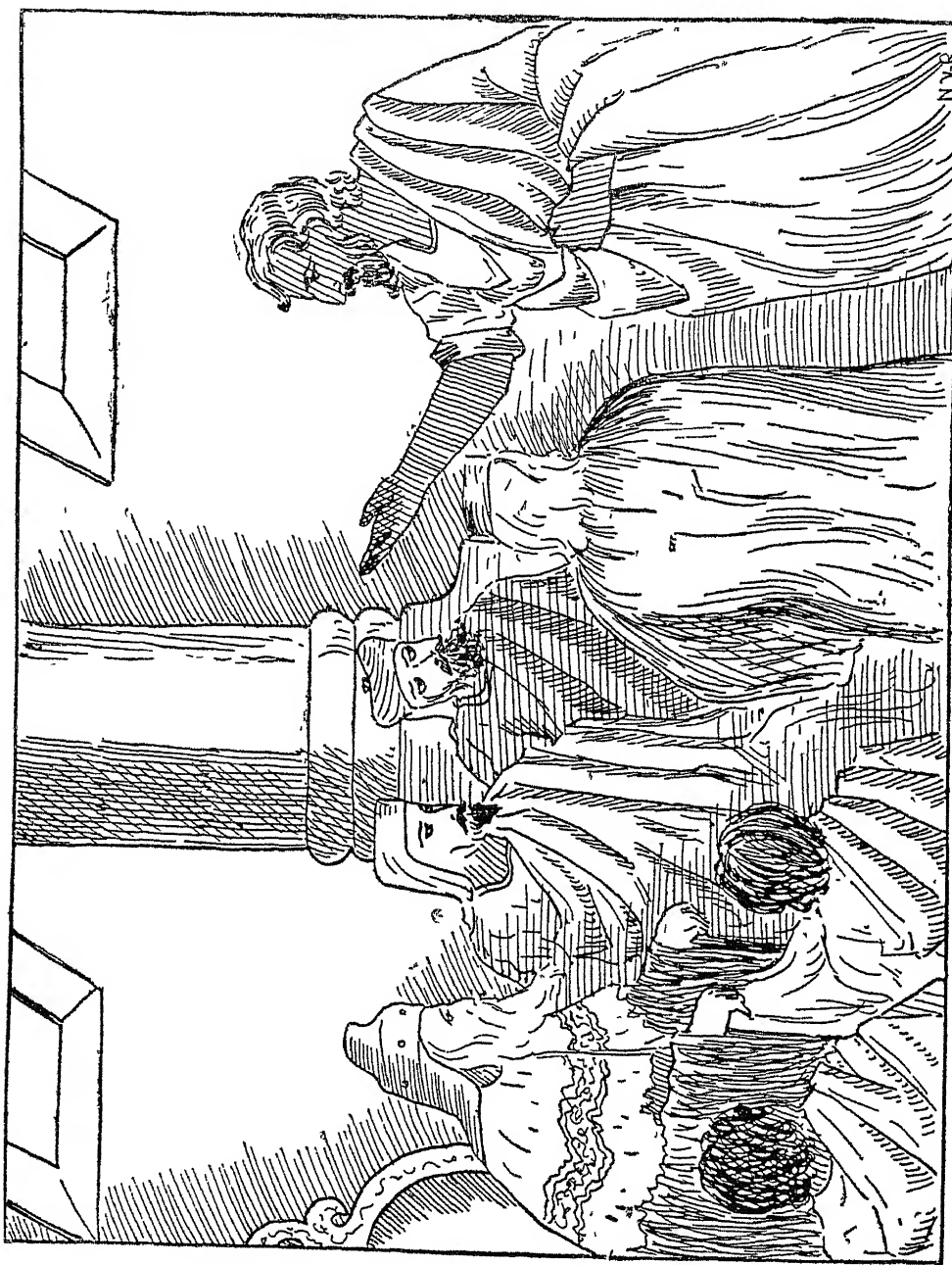
DUKE.—Whoe'er he be that in this foul proceeding
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself¹⁶
And you of her, the bloody book of law¹⁷
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter¹⁸
After your own sense,¹⁹ yea, though our proper²⁰ son
Stood in your action.²¹

BRA:—Humbly, I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor, whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate for the state-affairs
Hath hither brought.

ALL:—We are very sorry for it.

1. Straight: at once. 2. We lack'd . . . to night (1 e) in connection with the defence of Cyprus. 3. So . yours in connection with his daughter's elopement. 4. On . of. 5. Nor me nor does the public interest concern me much for the time being. 6 Flood gate . over-flooding or flowing. 7. O'er-bearing over-whelming or dominating. 8 Engulfs over-fills. 9. Still itself; remains constant or unchanged, rather unaffected in its nature by other sorrows. 10 Abused: wrongly used or treated. 11 Corrupted drawn, changed or perverted. 12. Mountebanks . quacks. 13 Preposterously fundamentally or thoroughly. 14. Sans without. 15 For Nature... could not: the meaning here is, 'My daughter, not being deficient, blind or lame of (wanting in) sense, could not have had her nature so thoroughly changed or perverted as to like a black Moor but for witchcraft'. 16 Beguiled . herself deprived your daughter of her right senses. 17. The bloody book of law the book of law that imposes capital punishments for serious offences by hanging, be-heading, etc., involving the shedding of blood. 18. Bitter letter to the very letter, (i.e. strictly. The prose order here is, 'You shall yourself read the bloody book of law in the bitter letter'. 19, After.sense . as you think fit; according to your sense or rational faculty. 20. Proper: own or natural. 21. Action a legal term meaning accusation or suit; (meaning, though the subject of your accusation may be my own son.)

Othello answers the charge of Brabantio by explaining how he won over and married Desdemona.



A plain unvarnished tale of Sincerity, unlike a laboured and well varnished report, will oft carry conviction.

OTHELLO DELIVERS AN UNVARNISHED TALE OF HIS LOVE-AFFAIR
WITH DESDEMONA,

But Brabantio is not satisfied.

DUKE:—(To Othello) What, in¹ your own part,² can you say to this ?

BRA—Nothing, but this is so.³

OTH:—Most potent, grave, and reverend Signiors, my very noble and approved⁴ good masters, that I have ta'en away this old man's daughter, it is most true, true, I have married her the very head and front⁵ of my offending hath this extent,⁶ no more. Rude am I in my speech, and little blest with the soft phrase of peace⁷. For, since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,⁸ (till now some nine moons wasted,⁹) they have used their dearest action¹⁰ in the tented field,¹¹ and little of this great world can I speak, more than pertains to feats of broil and battle.¹² and therefore little shall I grace¹³ my cause in speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience, I will a round¹⁴ unvarnish'd¹⁵ tale deliver of my whole course of love, what drugs, what charms, what conjuration¹⁶ and what mighty magic—for such proceeding¹⁷ I am charged withal¹⁸—I won his daughter with.

BRA:—A maiden never bold,¹⁹ of spirit²⁰ so still and quiet that her motion²¹ blush'd²² at herself, and she,—in spite of nature,²³ of years, of country, credit,²⁴ everything—to fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!²⁵ 'Tis²⁶ a judgment,²⁷ maim'd and most imperfect,²⁸ that will confess²⁹ perfection³⁰ so could err³¹ against

1 In on (both may be used) 2 Part behalf The phrase means, 'for yourself' or 'on your own account' 3 So as I have described in my complaint.
4 Approved accepted or regarded to be 'good', meaning highly-esteemed.
5 Head and front the sum and substance 6 Hath this extent goes only so far.
7 Soft phrase of peace the polite and peaceful language of civilians as contrasted with the rough and stern mode of speech by soldiers. 8 Seven years' pith seven years of muscular or bodily development, (i e) since I was seven years old.
9 Till ...wasted up to this time, excepting nine months of interval during which period I was doing nothing in the shape of active military duties.
10 Dearest action deeds which they (arms) liked or loved most, therefore, deeds that were best done and consequently most effectual 11 Tented field battle-field pitched with tents, (i e) military camps 12 And little . battle I have little or no knowledge of the world abroad, excepting matters relating to fights and battles 13 Grace support by graceful or suitable language 14 Round, plain, blunt or straight-forward 15 Unvarnish'd uncoloured; (i e) without the additional polish of language 16 Conjuratation a calling or summoning of the spirits by mysterious words or magical formulas 17 Proceeding conduct or practice. 18 Withal meaning only 'with' 19 Bold forward 20 Of spirit by disposition or inclination 21 Motion movement or simple conduct 22 Blush'd . caused her to blush or to feel abashed, or ashamed. 23 Nature natural disposition 24 Credit reputation or public regard 25 To fall . look on . to love a fearful or terrible person 26 'It' refers to the clause 'To fall . . . look on.' 27 Judgment opinion or conclusion. 28 Maim'd and imperfect defective and faulty. 29 Confess admit. 30 Perfection. a person of excellence—excellent conduct. (Before the word 'perfection,' 'that' is omitted 31. So could err . blunder in such a manner.

all rules of nature;¹ and must be driven² to find out practices of cunning hell,³ why this should be. I therefore vouch⁴ again, that with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood, or with some dram conjured⁵ to this effect,⁶ he wrought upon her.

DUKE. —To vouch this, is no proof,
Without more certain and more overt test⁷
Than these thin habits⁸ and poor likelihoods⁹
Of modern seeming¹⁰ do perfer¹¹ against him¹².

FIRST SEN. —But Othello, speak:
Did you, by indirect and forced courses,
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or, came it¹³ by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth¹⁴

OTH —I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father
If you do find me foul¹⁵ in her report,¹⁶
The trust, the office I do hold of you.
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even¹⁷ fall upon my life.

DUKE.—Fetch Desdemona hither

OTH.—Ancient, conduct them, you best know the place; [Exit Iago.
[To the Duke] And, till she come, as truly as to Heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,¹⁸
So justly¹⁹ to your grave ears²⁰ I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love
And she in mine

1 The prose order of these lines is to confess that perfection could so err against all rules of nature, (the natural process or course of life) is a judgment that is maimed and most imperfect 2. And must be driven after 'and,' the subject 'one' or 'we' is understood. 3 Practices of cunning hell evil ways or works of cunning rascals 4 Vouch: assert or affirm 5. Dram conjured a small quantity of medicine mumbled with charms 6 To this effect to produce this result 7. Overt test external or independent evidence. 8 Thin habits slender assumptions. 9 Poor likelihoods weak probabilities. 10 Of modern seeming: of common appearance and not of real truth 11. Prefer produce. 12. The prose order of the whole passage is, 'To vouch this, without more certain and more overt test than (the test which) these thin habits and poor likelihoods of .. him, is no proof' 13 Came it did the affection come? 14. Or came it .. affordeth? or, did you win her love by request or pleading, and such fair conversation as takes place between two sincere persons that are naturally inclined to love each other. 15. Foul: lying 16 If.....report, if you discover me from her account to be a liar. 17 Even: evenly or impartially, without the consideration of the trust or office I hold of you; or, it may go with 'Life,' when the meaning will be, let your sentence be even Capital Punishment. 18 As truly . blood . as sincerely as I would admit my faults or sins before God. 19 So justly: so exactly, or in the same correct manner. 20 Grave ears: serious attention or consideration.

DUKE:—Say it, Othello.

OTH:—Her father loved me, oft invited me,
Still questioned me the story of my life
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have passed

[For the rest, refer to page 17.

She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,¹
And I loved her that she did pity them.²
This only³ is the witchcraft I have used.
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.⁴

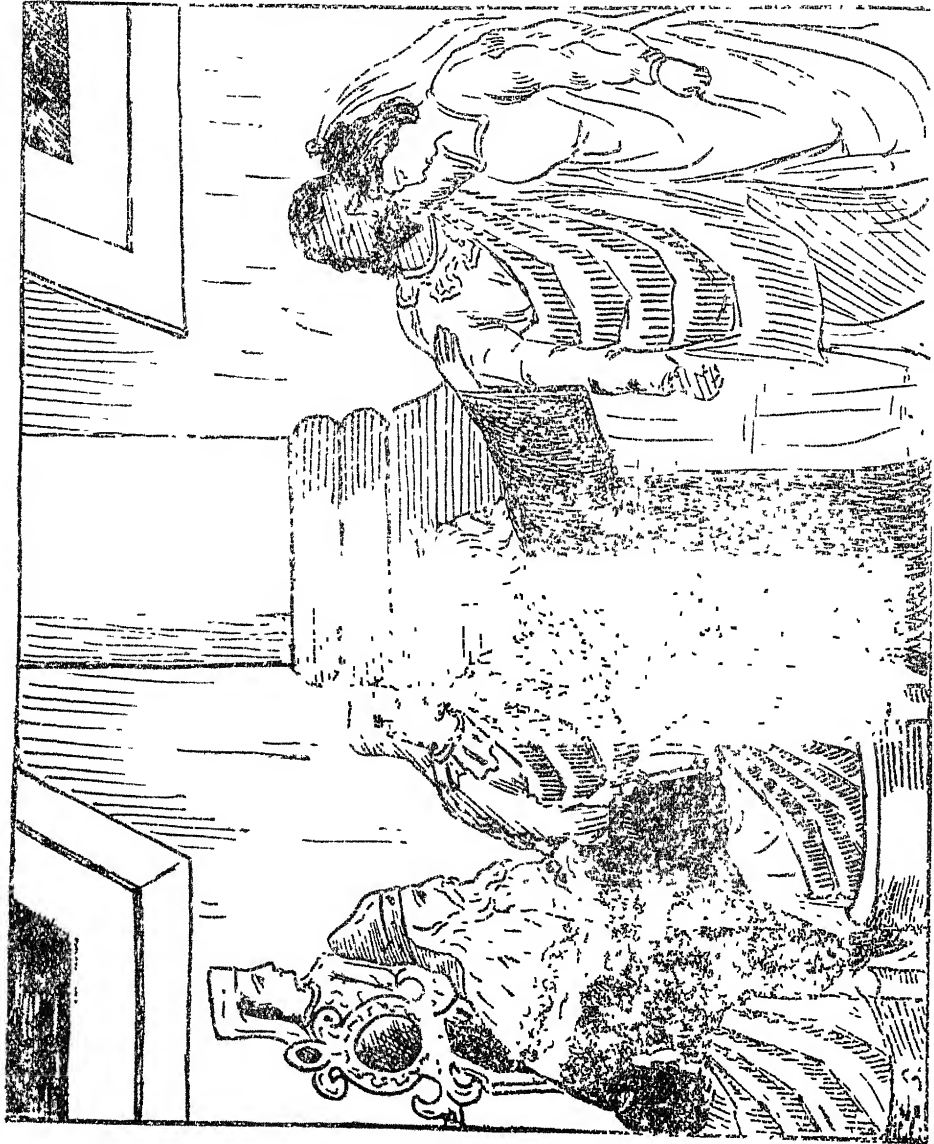
[Enter Des. Iago, etc.

DUKE:—I think this tale would win my daughter too.
Good Brabantio, take up⁵ this mangled matter⁶ at the best.⁷
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.⁸

BRA:—I pray you, hear her speak.
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction⁹ on my head, if my bad¹⁰ blame
Light¹¹ on the man¹²! Come hither, gentle mistress.
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

1. Pass'd passed through or experienced. 2 Did pity them sympathized with me for them. 3. Only this word must go before 'witchcraft.' 4 Let . . . it let her give her own evidence. 5. Take up . make up, settle or reconcile yourself to. 6. Mangled matter: mutilated or spoiled affair, (in reference to his daughter). 7. At the best: for what it is worth; as best as you can. The sense of the line,—'Take up.....best'—is, 'reconcile yourself to this situation in the best manner you can.' It is the same as saying, 'make the best of a bad bargain.' 8. Men.....hands: people (if wise and patient) would prefer to use their weapons even if broken, and not throw them away, rather than use their bare hands. 9. Destruction after this word, 'may fall' is understood. 10. Bad: vicious. 11. Light alight or fall. 12. Destructionman let me be ruined if I wrongly hold him responsible or blame-worthy.

Desdemona, called upon, confirms the truth of Othello's account



How Truth fits into Truth; not_so, one lie into another!

(Pic. 8)

DESDEMONA CONFIRMS OTHELLO'S STORY; BRABANTIO IS DISGUSTED WITH
HER; THE DUKE TRIES TO COMFORT HIM BUT IN VAIN.

DES:—My noble father, I do perceive here a divided¹ duty :
To you, I am bound for life and education ;
My life and education both do learn² me
How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter.³ But here 's my husband ;
And, so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge⁴ that I may profess⁵
Due⁶ to the Moor, my lord.

BRA:—God be with you ! I have done.⁷
Please it your Grace, on to⁸ the State-affairs :
I had rather to⁹ adopt a child than get¹⁰ it.
Come hither, Moor
I here do give thee that, with all my heart,
Which, (but thou hast already), with all my heart,
I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,¹¹
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For, thy escape¹² would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs¹³ on them. I have done, my lord.

DUKE:—Let me speak like yourself,¹⁴ and lay a sentence¹⁵
Which, as a grize or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late¹⁶ on hopes depended.¹⁷
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

1, Divided here it means, split into two, or double 2. Learn teach
3, You are . . daughter : till now, you have been my only master, and I, as
your daughter, have been entirely bound to you alone in duty. 4. Challenge .
claim or boldly assert. 5. Profess . observe or practise ; also claim. 6. Due .
as due. 7. I have done I have finished, or I now drop the matter. 8. On to .
go on with, or take up. 9. Had rather to would rather. 10. Get beget or
give birth to. 11. Jewel referring to Desdemona sneeringly. 12. Escape .
escapade or elopement. 13. To hang clogs by hanging clogs or weights ; by
imposing severe restraint on their movements. 14. Like yourself as feelingly as
you do, or sympathizing with you. 15. Lay a sentence pronounce a moral.
16 Late . of late or lately. 17. The prose order of the two lines is, 'When
remedies, which late depended on hopes are past, the griefs are ended by seeing
the worst'; meaning, 'when our sorrows are past remedies or cures (which at one
time we hoped would prove effective), then the only way to end them is to
reconcile ourselves to the worst that ensues : that is to say, 'Patience is the
best remedy.' The same idea is contained in the proverb, 'What cannot be
cured must be endured.'

What cannot be preserv'd when Fortune takes,
 Patience her injury ¹ a mockery makes.²
 The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief,
 He robs himself that spends³ a bootless⁴ grief.⁵

BRA.—So, let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile,⁶

We lose it not, so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence⁷ well, that nothing bears

But the free comfort⁸ which from thence he hears,⁹

But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,¹⁰

That, to pay¹¹ grief, must of poor patience¹² borrow

These sentences, to sugar or to gall,¹³

Being strong on both sides,¹⁴ are equivocal,¹⁵

But words are words, I never yet did hear

That the bruise'd¹⁶ heart was pierced¹⁷ through the ear.¹⁸

I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of State.

1. Her injury the loss inflicted by Fortune or Fate. 2 The prose order of the two lines is, 'When Fortune takes what cannot be preserved, then Patience makes a mockery of her injury, (i.e., makes light of or fun of her injury)'. 3 Spends wastes his time by brooding over. 4. Bootless useless 5. The thief that steals another's goods is afraid of detection and is also not satisfied, whereas the person robbed, if reconciled to his loss, is free from these feelings, and is thus superior to the thief in this way, he may be said to rob the thief of contentment and peace. 6 Beguile deceive or deprive us by some artifice. The prose order is 'So, let the Turk beguile us of Cyprus' 7 Sentence punishment 8 Comfort relief 9 The meaning of the two lines is, 'That person is able to bear his punishment well (without complaint) who takes it, not as a punishment but as a voluntary penance, or not as a restraint but as a relief. 10. Bears.....sorrow actually suffers from both the punishment and the sorrow, (as contrasted with the cheerful acceptance of the punishment, mentioned in the previous lines.) 11. Pay pay back or retaliate. 12 Poor patience helpless passivity, or inactivity through inability. The meaning of the two lines is 'The person who, on the other hand, tries to lessen his grief by doing nothing through helplessness, will experience the punishment as a sorrowful or miserable affair. 13. To sugar or to gall sweet or bitter. 14. Being .. sides. intensive either way. 15. Equivocal: equal both ways' 16. Bruis'd: wounded. 17 Pierced reached. 18. I never did.....the ear. I have not yet heard that an afflicted mind can be soothed by listening to mere words or talks.

The Duke instructs Othello to proceed to Cyprus at once; also grants Othello's request to let Desdemona join him there.



How readily Rights and Requests are granted in times of Danger!

(Pic. 9.)

OTHELLO, ORDERED TO GO TO CYPRUS; AND DESDEMONA DECIDES TO FOLLOW HIM.

DUKE —The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. Othello, the fortitude¹ of the place is best known to you ; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency,² yet opinion,—a sovereign mistress of effects,³ —throws a more safer voice on you , and you must therefore be content to slubber⁴ the gloss of your new fortunes⁵ with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

OTH—The tyrant custom,⁶ most grave senators, Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war⁷ My thrice-driven⁸ bed of down ⁹ I do agnize¹⁰ A natural and prompt alacrity¹¹ I find in hardness,¹² and do undertake These present wars against the Ottomites. Most humbly therefore bending to your state, I crave¹³ fit disposition¹⁴ for my wife,— Due reference of place ¹⁵ and exhibition,¹⁶ With such accommodation and besort¹⁷ As levels with her breeding.¹⁸

DUKE —If you please, be't at her father's.

BRA.—I'll not have it so.

OTH —Nor I.

DES —Nor I ; I would not there reside, To put my father in impatient thoughts By being in his eye ¹⁹ Most gracious Duke, To my unfolding²⁰ lend your prosperous ear,²¹ And let me find a charter²² in your voice To assist my simpleness ²³

DUKE —What would you, Desdemona ?

1 Fortitude strength 2 Allowed sufficiency allowed or approved to be sufficient 3 A sovereign effects the ruling factor or the important agency that leads to or produces striking (social) changes or results 4 Slubber spoil or sully 5 The gloss of your new fortunes the glitter of your newly acquired fortune, (i.e.) the happiness of your recent marriage 6 Tyrant custom here it means, 'rigorous military rules' 7 Flinty... war, the idea is that, as a soldier, he had to sleep with his steel armour on. 8 Thrice-driven well-prepared or comfortable 9 Down soft feathers 10 Agnize: own or acknowledge 11 Alacrity alacrity, readiness, willingness 12 Hardness: hardship 13 Crave beg for, or request. 14 Fit disposition, proper arrangement. 15 Due reference of. with proper reference to 16 Place and exhibition: lodging and provision for her boarding 17 Besort rank or quality. 18 As levels... breeding, as is equal or suitable to her up-bringing or mode of life (as a Senator's daughter). 19 To put eye to make my father impatient or irritated, by being present before him always. 20 Unfolding: narration or what I am about to say. 21 Prosperous ear propitious or kind attention. 22 Charter. full support. 23 Simpleness singleness or helpless state

DES:—That I did love the Moor to live with him,
 My downright violence¹ and storm of fortunes²
 May trumpet³ to the world : my heart's subdued
 Even to the very quality of my lord.⁴
 I saw Othello's visage⁵ in his mind,⁶
 And to his honours⁷ and his valiant parts⁸
 Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.⁹
 So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,—
 A moth of peace,¹⁰—and he go to the war,
 The rites¹¹ for which I love him are bereft¹² me,
 And I, a heavy interim¹³, shall support¹⁴
 By his dear absence¹⁵ Let me go with him.

OTH—Let her have your voices.¹⁶
 Vouch with me, Heaven¹⁷ I therefore beg it, not
 To please the palate of my appetite,¹⁸
 Nor to comply with heat,¹⁹—the young affects
 In me defunct²⁰.—and proper satisfaction,
 But to be free and bounteous to her mind.²¹
 And Heaven defend your good souls, that²² you think
 I will your serious and great business scant²³
 For²⁴ she is with me No, when light-wing'd toys²⁵
 Of feather'd Cupid²⁶—seal²⁷ with wanton dulness²⁸
 My speculative and offic'd instruments.²⁹

1 Downright violence the thorough, complete or absolute force. 2. Storm of fortunes stormy fortune, or furious career. 3. Trumpet: loudly proclaim, the prose order of the lines, 'That I . . . world' is 'My down-right to the world that I with him' The meaning is, the force and violence of my affections which have led to sudden changes in my fortune will widely proclaim to the world, etc.—4 My heart . . . of my lord the whole tenour of my mind has now completely adjusted or reconciled itself to the quality or the natural character of my husband. 5 Visage. face or appearance 6. In his mind through his character. The meaning is, 'I chose Othello more for his character than for his appearance'. 7 Honours: distinctions. 8. Valiant parts: heroic character. 9 Consecrate devote or dedicate as if to a holy object. 10. A moth of peace to be an idle creature 11. The rites the duties of married life 12. Bereft me. I am deprived of. 13 Heavy interim tedious interval. 14. Shall support. shall have to pass through 15. Dear grievous or sorrowful. The prose order is, 'And I shall support a heavy interim by his dear absence' 16. Voices votes or decisions. 17 Vouch. Heaven! let God be my witness. 18. Not to pleaseappetite not to make it agreeable to my personal likes or inclinations. 19. Norheat; not to satisfy my passion. 20. The young...defunct; the hot and undisciplined emotions or affections having abated or subsided in me; (i. e. I am no longer a hot-headed youth). 21. But to be free.mind. but to let me be liberal and generous to concede or comply with her mental desires (as opposed to my carnal appetites). 22. That: if 23. Scant: neglect. 24. For because. What Othello means is that he will not neglect his duties, because of his wife living with him. 25. Light-wing'd toys: arrows or missiles that are airy, not heavy. 26. Feather'd Cupid: The God of Love having wings. 27. Seal: blind or close. 28. Wanton dulness. mischievous dimness or bluntness 29. My speculativeinstruments; my senses or faculties, well-officed or well-used for speculative or reasoning purposes.

That¹ my disports² corrupt and taint my business,³
 Let housewives⁴ make a skillet⁵ of my helm,⁶
 And all indign⁷ and base adversities⁸
 Make head against⁹ my estimation.¹⁰

DUKE.—Be it as you shall privately determine,
 Either for her stay or going The affair cries haste,
 And speed must answer it.

1st SEN.—You must away to-night.

OTH.—With all my heart.

DUKE.—At nine i' the morning, here we'll meet again.
 Othello, leave some officer behind,
 And he shall our commission bring to you,
 With such things else of quality¹¹ and respect¹²
 As doth import¹³ you

OTH.—So please your Grace, my Ancient,
 A man he is of honesty and trust;
 To his conveyance I assign my wife,
 With what else needful your good Grace shall think
 To be sent after me.

DUKE.—Let it be so. Good night to every one.
 (To Brabantio.) And, noble Signior,
 If Virtue no delighted¹⁴ beauty lack,
 Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.¹⁵

1st SEN.—Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

BRA.—Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see.¹⁶
 She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.¹⁷

OTH.—My life upon her faith¹⁸

[Exit Duke, Sen. etc

1. That so that. 2. Disports sportings. 3. When light-wing'd . business : when I allow my love-affairs to over-power my reasoning faculties to such an extent as to cause my sportings with Desdemona to interfere with or spoil my business, then, etc., 4. Housewives . married women given to household duties. 5. Skillet a frying pan 6. Helm helmet or hat. 7. Indign : full of indignity, or shameful 8. Base adversities low or petty troubles or annoyances 9. Make head against go against or destroy. 10. Estimation: reputation or fame The meaning of the three lines is : 'Let women mock me, and let me lose my fame by being exposed to all sorts of troubles, big and small.' 11. Quality . importance. 12. Respect deserving attention. 13. Import : concern 14. Delighted . delighting. 15. If Virtue...black: The meaning of the two lines is, "If virtue by itself is considered a merit involving grace and beauty, your son-in-law has that virtue;" (i.e.) he should not be judged by his colour but by his character. 16. If thou . . see : if you have watchful eyes, if you have the ability to observe her carefully. 17. These two lines are ominous and tragic in their import as they later on furnish Iago with a handle to strengthen Othello's suspicion against Desdemona, already excited by other circumstances. 18. My . . faith: (she is very faithful to me, and) I can even stake my life upon her fidelity.

Othello instructs Iago, the professed friend, to bring Desdemona over to Cyprus.



How oft are people won over by pleasing but hypocritical professions of interested persons!

(Pic. 10)

OTHELLO'S INSTRUCTIONS TO IAGO.

OTH:—Honest Iago, my Desdemona must I leave to thee:

I prithee,¹ let thy wife attend on her ;
And bring them after² in the best advantage.³

Come, Desdemona ; I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee :⁴ we must obey the time.⁵

[Exit Othello and Desdemona.]

1. Prithee: equal to, 'Pray thee', meaning 'I pray to you or request you'.
2. After: afterwards. 3. In the best advantage: in the best manner possible.
4. I have but.....with thee: I have only a short time at my disposal for arranging the domestic and other matters in your happy company. 5. Obey the time suit ourselves to the time at our disposal.

Iago preaches his philosophy to Roderigo, dispraising Love and Virtue, but praising the potency of Money.



Riches, in the hand of selfish, designing persons, become a dangerous instrument of mischief and oppression.

(Pic. 11.)

IAGO PREACHES HIS PHILOSOPHY TO RODERIGO.

ROD:—Iago!

IAGO:—What sayst thou, noble heart?¹

ROD:—What will I do, thinkest thou?

IAGO:—Why, go to bed and sleep.

ROD:—I will incontinently² drown myself.

IAGO:—Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee after.

Why, thou silly gentleman!

ROD:—It is silliness to live when to live is torment and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.³

IAGO:—O, villainous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven years; and, since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury,⁴ I never found man that knew how to love himself.⁵ Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.⁶

ROD:—What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond;⁷ but, it is not in my virtue⁸ to amend it.

IAGO:—Virtue! a fig!⁹ 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus.¹⁰ Our bodies are gardens, to the which our Wills are gardeners;¹¹ so that, if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender¹² of herbs or distract¹³ it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry,¹⁴ why, the power and corrigible authority¹⁵ of this lies in our Wills. If the balance¹⁶ of our lives had not one scale of Reason to poise¹⁷ another of Sensuality,¹⁸ the blood and baseness of our natures¹⁹ would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions.²⁰ but, we have Reason to cool²¹ our raging motions,²²

1. Noble heart said sneeringly, though apparently intended to coax.
 2. Incontinently: without hesitation, or immediately. 3. It is . . . physician it is foolish to continue to live when life becomes miserable, and, in that case, death is the only cure, (as it frees us from sorrows and pains, in the same manner in which a doctor prescribes a cure to free us from our diseases.) 4. Since I . . . injury from the time in which I could understand what was profitable and what was not, (i.e.) since I attained the age of discretion. 5. I never . . . himself: I have never come across a man who knew how to serve his own interests best.
 6. Ere . . . baboon I will rather become an animal and change my human nature than think of drowning myself for the love of a guinea-hen (i.e.) a fast woman or a mere girl. 7. Fond much infatuated in love. 8. Virtue. character or ability.
 9. Fig. non-sense or trash. 10. It is in . . . thus we can ourselves make us what we want to be. this agrees with the proverb that 'Man is the architect of his own fortune.' 11. Our bodies . . . gardeners as the gardener changes or brings up the garden as he wishes, so our Will-power can direct our bodies (i.e.) ourselves. 12. Gender: class or type. 13. Distract confuse (by too many varieties.) 14. To have . . . industry to allow the garden to dry up by our negligence, or to make it fruitful with our labor. 15. Corrigible authority. authority that has the capacity to correct. What Iago means in the whole passage is, 'It lies with us to make the best or the worst of the world around us'.
 16. Balance: pair of scales. 17. Poise counter-balance or weigh down.
 18. Another of Sensuality another scale of carnal passions. 19. The blood . . . natures: the violence of the low or depraved passions of our (animal) nature.
 20. Preposterous conclusions extra-ordinary or dangerous results. 21. Cool: subside or lessen. 22. Raging motions: burning passions.

our carnal stings,¹ our unbitted² lusts ; whereof,³ I take this⁴ (that⁵ you call love), to be a sect or scion.⁶

ROD :—It cannot be.⁷

LAGO :—It⁸ is merely a lust of the blood⁹ and a permission of the Will.¹⁰ Come, be a man ;¹¹ drown thyself,—drown cats and blind puppies ! I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving¹² with cables of perdurable¹³ toughness : I could never better stead¹⁴ thee than now. Put money in thy purse ; follow thou the wars¹⁵, defeat¹⁶ thy favour¹⁷ with an usurped¹⁸ beard ; I say, put money in thy purse.

It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor—put money in thy purse—nor he, his to her : it was a violent¹⁹ commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable²⁰ sequestration ;²¹ put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills. fill thy purse with money. The food that to him now is as luscious²² as locusts,²³ shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida.²⁴ She must change for youth.²⁵ When she is sated²⁶ with his body, she will find the error of her choice she must have change, she must : therefore put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs damn²⁷ thyself, do it a more delicate²⁸ way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst.

If sanctimony²⁹ and a frail³⁰ vow³¹ be-twixt an erring³² barbarian and a supersubtle³³

1. Carnal stings : impulses that sting and goad us on to satisfy our bodily passions. 2. Unbitted unbridled or uncontrollable. 3. Whereof : of which, (referring to lusts). 4. I take this : I take it, or I hold it to be. 5. That : what. 6. Sect or scion : section or cutting. What Iago means is, 'But for our Reason which controls our Passions, we shall be landed in disasters. It is our Reason that checks our Passions including even what you call Love.' 7. It cannot be : I do not believe what you say about Love. 8. It : referring to 'Love'. 9. Lust of the blood : a burning desire (or animal passion) that is instinctive or natural. 10. Permission of the Will : permitted or passively borne by the Will without check. 11. Be a man : be courageous. 12. Knit to thy deserving : bound to you to serve your desires. 13. Perdurable : very durable or strong. 14. Stead : serve or help. 15. Follow thou the wars : volunteer yourself as a soldier. 16. Defeat : change or disguise. 17. Favour : face or countenance. 18. Usurped : assumed or false. 19. Violent : passionate and stormy, rather than reasonable or calm. 20. Answerable : consequential, or following as a result. 21. Sequestration : separation. 22. Luscious : delicious or tasteful. 23. Locusts : referring to the sweet and juicy beans of a tree called 'Locust', found in America. 24. Coloquintida : a bitter and poisonous fruit of a wild creeper, growing in Western Asia. The meaning of the sentence is, 'Desdemona who is so sweet and welcome to Othello now will shortly become bitter and loathsome.' 25. Change for youth : change her liking or desire for a younger man. 26. Sated : satisfied. 27. Damn : destroy. 28. Delicate : appropriate or suitable. 29. Sanctimony : assumed sanctity or pretended sacredness (with regard to marriage.) 30. Frail : weak or not lasting. 31. Vow : marriage vow, or promise made during marriage. 32. Erring : blundering or erratic. 33. Supersubtle : extremely fine and delicate (in feeling and disposition.)

Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell,¹ thou shalt enjoy her ; therefore, make money. A pox of drowning thyself :² it is clean³ out of the way : seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing⁴ thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.⁵

ROD:—Wilt thou be fast⁶ to my hopes, if I depend on⁷ the issue?

IAGO:—Thou art sure of me : go, make money : I have told thee often, and re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor : my cause⁸ is hearted :⁹ thine hath no less reason.¹⁰ Let us be conjunctive¹¹ in our revenge against him. If thou canst cuckold¹² him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport¹³. There are many events in the womb of Time,¹⁴ which will be delivered. Traverse,¹⁵ go ; provide thy money. We will have more of this¹⁶ to-morrow. Adieu.

ROD:—Where shall we meet i' the morning ?

IAGO:—At my lodging.

ROD:—I'll be with thee betimes.¹⁷

IAGO:—Go to ; farewell. (Rod. is going) Do you hear, Roderigo ?

ROD:—What say you ?

IAGO:—No more of drowning, do you hear ?

ROD:—I am changed : I'll go sell all my land.

[Exit Rod.]

1. Here, a verb, 'to undo', must be supplied after, 'hell.' Tribe of hell: devils (here, referring to devilish or wicked plans.) 2. A pox of drowning thyself. equal to 'Thy drowning be hanged!' 3. Clean: completely. 4. Compassing: securing or obtaining. 5. The meaning of the line is 'rather perish in securing thy object, than die ignobly out of helplessness'. 6. Fast: firm and faithful. 7. Depend on: look to and work for; i.e. keep constantly pending before my mind. 8. Cause: referring to Iago's hatred. 9. Hearted: deeply rooted in the heart. 10. Thine.....reason: thy cause (to hate him) is equally reasonable and strong. 11. Conjunctive: joined together (i.e.) working together. 12. Cuckold. a man whose wife is false to him; here it means, 'Render Othello suspicious of her chastity or fidelity to him'. 13. Thou dost.....sport it is a gain to you and a play to me. 14. Womb of Time, 'id' future. (Time is compared to a pregnant woman; and events or incidents are children delivered in proper season.) 15. Traverse march or go. 16. More of this: more talk about this. 17. Betimes' in proper time, or punctually.

Iago's artful and villainous character, revealed by his Soliloquy.



How oft the tongue spontaneously reveals one's Mind and Character

(Pic. 12)

IAGO'S SOLILOQUY.

IAGO—Thus do I ever make my fool my purse,¹
 For, I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,²
 If I would time expend with such a snipe³
 But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor,
 And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
 He has done my office⁴ I know not if't be true.
 But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
 Will do as if for surety⁵. He holds me well,⁶
 The better shall my purpose work on him.
 Cassio's a proper man.⁷ let me see now.
 To get his place, and plume up my will⁸
 In double knavery—How, how?—let's see.
 After some time, to abuse Othello's ear⁹
 That he is too familiar with his wife.
 He hath a person and a smooth dispose¹⁰
 To be suspected, framed¹¹ to make women false.¹²
 The Moor is of a free and open nature
 That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
 And will as tenderly¹³ be led by the nose¹⁴ as asses are.
 I have't. It is engender'd.¹⁵ Hell and Night¹⁶
 Must bring this monstrous birth¹⁷ to the world's light [Exit.]

NOTE —This soliloquy gives us a further revelation of Iago's villainy and how he proudly boasts of it and glories in it

1. My purse my money-bag or purse from which I can draw money at will.
 2. Profane : belittle, spoil. 3. Snipe : a small and silly bird (easily caught), a fool or a worthless fellow. The prose order of the lines is,—“ For, I should profane mine own gain'd knowledge, if I would expend time with.... 4 'Twixt my sheets he has done my office : he has been familiar with my wife. 5. But I. . . surety : but I will treat this surmise or suspicion as if it were a certainty or an 'absolute truth 6. He holds me well : he has a good opinion of me, holds me in good esteem, thinks well of me. 7. Proper handsome. 8. To plume up my will, (a plume is a feather worn as a sign of victory, ornament or distinction) : to adjust the plume of, to boast of, to glory in ; Iago means here that he will put an additional feather to his Will-power in knavery, that he will show how brilliant and victorious is his Will in doubling his knavery, first, by bringing about Cassio's dismissal and securing his place ; and second, by poisoning Othello's mind against him by alleging his undue familiarity with Desdemona 9. To abuse Othello's ear . to deceive, to corrupt, to poison Othello's mind thro' his ear. 10. Smooth dispose : seductive or pleasant disposition. 11. Framed is framed, constituted or made. 12. To make women false to tempt women to prove false to their husbands, (by his seductive ways.) 13. Tenderly : softly, easily, or without any protest. 14. Led by the nose : led or directed, as animals are by a ring or rope through their nostrils. 15. Engender'd : conceived, as in embryo. 16. Hell and Night : devil and darkness ; i. e. wicked plans secretly hatched. 17. Monstrous birth : horrible or wicked product. What Iago means is, that his wicked plans hitherto existing only in his mind, will now be put into action and revealed to the world,

A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF

ACT I.

The First Act gives the preliminary events of the Play as they take place in Venice.

PART I.

Othello, the Moor, a General in the service of the Venetian State, is often invited by Brabantio—a rich Senator,—to his house. There, on request, he recounts the experiences of his life before him and his daughter, Desdemona. These excite the romantic imagination and the love of the latter for the Hero. She finally leaves her house on a particular night, joins him and secretly marries him.

Roderigo, (a wealthy Venetian youth, and a former suitor who has been rejected by Desdemona), and Iago, (Othello's Ensign, Ancient or Flag-bearer, whose claims for Lieutenantcy have, as he thinks, been over-looked by that General in preference to Cassio),—both feel piqued and disappointed.

(A) Roderigo, the simpleton, is now in fact suffering from a peculiar feeling of annoyance or anger against the whole world; (a) against Othello, because he has successfully competed with him and won Desdemona's hand; (b) against Desdemona, because she has time and again rejected his several overtures for marriage, and has now made 'a gross revolt,' by choosing 'the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor',

Tying her duty, beauty, wit and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and every-where;

(c) against her father, because he has told him not to visit or hang about his house,—

I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors.
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee;

and, most of all, (d) against Iago, because he suspects that Iago, to whom he has given large sums of money to help him in his suit, was in the know about this secret marriage and did not inform him previously about it.

(B). Iago, too, in his turn, is much disappointed and chagrined,—filled with envy against Cassio, and with anger against Othello for the reason that, though,

Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capped to him, * * *

Yet,

He, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion, non-suits my mediators;
For, "Certes," says he, "I have already chose my officer."

Iago is conscious of his worth and ability, and, as he says, 'I know my price, I am worth no worse a place,' while Cassio who 'had the election' was, according to him, but 'a great arithmetician,' a 'debitor and creditor,' a 'counter-caster,' a characterless 'fellow, almost damn'd in a fair wife'; one

That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toge'd consuls can propose
As masterly as he; mere prattle without practice
Is all his soldiership

He is therefore naturally upset and inwardly rankles with indignation at, what he considers, the partiality of the Moor for Cassio, and, being a man of great intellect, cunning and resource, he is thinking of the ways and means to satisfy his feelings either by personal gain, or, failing which, by the ruin of the more successful persons.

PART II.

The play opens with Roderigo's taking Iago to task for not informing him beforehand about the secret marriage of Desdemona with Othello, of which, he thinks, Iago was in the full know. Iago denies knowledge of the affair, and says,

If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.

Moreover, in reply to Roderigo's further question, Iago avows his hatred against Othello for choosing Cassio to Lieutenancy instead of himself,—'Despise me, if I do not' (hate him). After stating his reasons for hating the Moor, he asks Roderigo to think and judge for himself,

Now, Sir, be judge yourself
Whether I, in any just term, am affined
To love the Moor?

'Why, then, should you follow the Moor?', naturally interrogates Roderigo. The reply, smacking of worldly wisdom, quickly follows from Iago,

O, Sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd.

Therefore, says Iago that he is not like

Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For nought but provender, and when he's old, cashier'd.

But, he is one of those

Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them; and when they have lined their coats
Do themselves homage. These fellows have some soul,
And such a one do I profess myself.

Therefore, he concludes,

In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end.

This assertion of hatred by Iago against Othello satisfies Roderigo, and pacifies him in his anger against him (Iago) for his supposed knowledge of Desdemona's secret marriage.

PART III.

Roderigo now changes the topic of his conversation and sneeringly refers to Othello's good fortune in having won Desdemona's heart and hand.—

What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,
If he can carry't thus!

This remark is made partly in wonder and partly in jealousy. And, so, Iago finds no difficulty in setting up Roderigo to spoil Othello's happiness and says,—

Make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets;
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies; though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't
As it may lose some colour.

For this purpose, Iago induces his pupil to 'call up her father,' 'to rouse him' and 'to incense her kinsmen.' Roderigo readily falls in with his proposal; and, so, reaching Brabantio's house, he says, 'I'll call aloud.' But mere 'calling aloud' would not satisfy Iago. With his ingrained capacity to convert and exaggerate small, unnoticed and unnoticeable things into big and ominous events, or, as he himself later on puts it (Act III. ; Sc. 3.) to change 'Trifles light as air' into 'confirmations strong as proofs of Holy Writ,' he advises Roderigo to put as much life and vigour in his shouting as though it were a terrible affair; and so he says,

'Do' (your shouting)

With like timorous accent and dire yell
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Roderigo, therefore, cries out loudly and boisterously,—

What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

And Iago himself joins in the game, with the tumultuous cry,—

Thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

PART IV.

Brabantio wakes up and, appearing at the window, asks,
What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

'Is all your family within?' asks Roderigo; 'Are your doors lock'd?' questions Iago. 'Why, wherefore ask you this?' demands Brabantio. Iago, in his desire to exaggerate the event and to excite the aged man, bursts out into a reply full of vulgar, foul and indecent expressions,—

'Zounds, Sir, you're robbed; for shame, put on your gown,
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.

And again, later on, to the still doubting but now angry Brabantio, he speaks in the same vulgar strain,—

'Zounds, Sir, you're one of those that will not serve God,
if the Devil bid you. Because we come to do you service and
you think we are ruffians, you'll have your daughter covered
with a Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews neigh to you;
you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for germans.

Brabantio is unable to make anything out of this vile but confused jargon. But he discerns Roderigo in the company by the mention of his name; and, so, he takes it that he has come there with other ruffians to annoy him for his having refused him the hand of his daughter. He therefore says,—

I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors;
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious knavery, dost thou come
To start my quiet,

Turning to his companion (Iago), he is rather incensed at his loud and vulgar tongue; and so he asks him if he has lost his wits; and, hearing his bad language, remarks 'What profane wretch art thou?'

To this Iago replies,—'I am one, Sir, that comes to tell you, your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.' At this foul expression Brabantio is shocked, and calls him 'Thou art a villain.' Fully conscious of his power and strength as a Senator, he further questions Iago,

What, tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.

And as for Roderigo, whom he takes to be the leader of the gang, he threatens him,

But thou must needs be sure (that)
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Roderigo, however, protests against this 'wrong rebuke' of Brabantio, and boldly but assuringly declares,

Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.

He then informs him how his

Fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o'the night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor.

He asks him to look for her in his house and straight satisfy himself as to the truth of his declaration, and to punish him if it prove false,—

If she be in her chamber or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the State
For thus deluding you.

At this information, Brabantio recovers from the confusion set up by the noise, and takes it as but a strange confirmation of his recent dream,—

This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already.

Therefore, he goes into his house, calls for a light and asks to call up all his people.

At this juncture, Iago, a finished double-dealer that he is, bids farewell to Roderigo and leaves him, saying.—

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced,—as, if I stay, I shall,—
Against the Moor.

In reality, full of hatred and spite against the Moor, but outwardly smooth, friendly and respectful, he now masterfully puts on extra deceitful appearances of love and loyalty for his superior; for, he knows that he (Othello) is still in the good graces of the State and very influential.

The State * * *
Cannot with safety cast him; for, he's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
Which even now stand in act, that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom they have none
To lead their business.

So, with consummate diplomacy and show of wisdom and propriety, he justifies his leave-taking of Roderigo, assuring him that

Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love
Which is indeed but sign.

Hence, he does not like to be seen there and 'produced against the Moor.' Therefore, directing Roderigo to 'lead to the Sagittary the raised search,' he leaves him to join Othello.

PART V.

Meanwhile, Brabantio comes down with servants and torches, after completing the search for his missing daughter. He is in a confounded state of mind, and talks and acts rather incoherently. Now he speaks to Roderigo about his daughter; then, he curses his fate and her; and next, calls up his people and cries for more light. He asks Roderigo, rather distracted, a string of questions, intermingled with some ejaculations,—

Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father?
How didst thou know 'twas she? O, she deceives me
Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers!
Are they married, think you?

Addressing himself, he rather pityingly says,—

And what's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness!

And, in his anger, he curses the fate of all fathers and warns them,—

Fathers, from hence, trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act,

He now befriends Roderigo and wishes, 'O, would you have had her.' He even promises to reward or compensate him for his efforts, saying 'On, good Roderigo; I'll deserve your pains.' And so, led by him, with weapons, lights and 'special officers of night,' he goes out to arrest the Moor.

PART VI.

At the Sagittary, Iago meets Othello, before whom he behaves very politely and sanctimoniously. He who, only a little while ago, spoke like a ruffian to Brabantio against Othello, now addresses him as 'Sir' and 'Your Honour.' Though, only recently, he expressed before Roderigo his deep and bitter hatred against Othello, he now turns round and speaks ill of Roderigo before the Moor. He is a cunning and consummate diplomat, putting on different masks, with different reasons for wearing each; and now about Roderigo, he says that

He prated
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against Your Honour,

that, out of his affection for his lord,

Nine or ten times,
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

Yet, because 'I lack iniquity sometimes to do me service,' because 'I hold it very stuff o'the conscience to do no contrived murder;' and because also of 'the little godliness I have;' 'I did full hard forbear him.' With such seemingly commendable and sincere moral scruples and reasons, Iago worms himself into the good graces of his master, and causes him to form a high opinion of himself (Iago).

This practised double-dealer, this two-headed Janus, this wearer of different masks for different occasions, this 'profane wretch,' now behaves as one of 'godliness,' as one led or deterred by 'conscience,' as one that lacks 'iniquity.' Having on the one hand abused Othello before Brabantio, as 'an old black ram' and 'a Barbary horse,' and vulgarly described his marriage with Desdemona as 'making the beast with two backs,' he now, on the other hand, takes a right turn-about in the presence of his master, professes a deep concern for the validity of his marriage. 'I pray you, Sir, are you fast married?' he rather eagerly enquires for, though only a little while ago he himself set up Brabantio against him, he now informs the Moor, with an apparent friendly interest, that

He (Brabantio) will divorce you
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law, with all his might to enforce it on,
Will give him cable.

This is not impossible for Brabantio to do, because

The magnifico is much beloved,
And hath in his office a voice potential
As double as the Duke's.

Othello, who, however, takes him to be really sincere, is not easily perturbed. He is conscious (a) of his strength through having rendered great services to the State, (b) of his worthiness or fitness for Desdemona's hand because of his royal blood, and, (c) lastly, of the plain and honest love by which he won her and not through any crooked, mean or forcible method. So, he informs his friend,—

(a) Let him do his spite,
My services, which I have done the Signory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints

(b) I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege, and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd.

(c) But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth.

PART VII.

In the meantime, a party of men with lights are seen approaching the place where they are. And, to Othello who questions as to 'what lights come yond?', Iago, the ever-deeply-concerned friend, eagerly and quickly replies,—'These are the raised father and his friends;' and, as if anxious for his master's security, he advises him 'You were best go in.' But Othello is fearless, his conduct being honorable and above board. To him, any shabby or secret action is loathsome; and so, he declares, 'Not I, I must be found.' Apart from this, he is conscious of no guilt or cunning practice on his part; hence, he confidently says that 'my parts' (referring to his services to the State); 'my title' (as belonging to a royal family); and 'my perfect soul' (owing to the honorable means by which he has obtained Desdemona's hand and heart), 'shall manifest me rightly.'

This party soon reaches Othello; but, it is one from the Duke and 'the Consuls, raised and met, at the Duke's already.' It is led by Cassio and has come to search for and summon Othello. 'You have been hotly call'd for,' informs Cassio,—

The Duke does greet you, General,
And he requires your hasty-post-hasty appearance,
Even on the instant.

It is in connection with 'something from Cyprus,' which is 'a business of some heat.' Othello gets ready to go with them to the Senate house, after spending 'a word here in the house.'

Another party, also with torches and weapons, soon comes up to that place. Cassio takes it to be from the Duke, but Iago, who has known the events well previously, rather hastily informs him that it is Brabantio's party. Once more, as if in sincere anxiety for his master's welfare, he warns Othello, 'General, be advised; he comes to bad intent.'

Othello challenges them,—'Holla ! stand there !' Roderigo, hearing his voice and seeing Othello in the opposite party, informs Brabantio,—'Signior, it is the Moor.' Thereupon, the Signior, in his anger, addresses him as a 'thief', and directs his men to take hold of him and punish him. 'Down with him, thief !' he cries out, and this is a sign for the men on both sides to attack one another. In the general confusion that follows, Iago, who has now been befriending Othello and to whom he desires to show his friendly feeling, forthwith attempts to fight Roderigo,—

You, Roderigo ! come, Sir, I am for you,

Such is the attitude of this sneaking, traitorous scoundrel

Othello, however, is not for fighting; and, so, he at once tells them,

Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter.

He even treats their anger lightly, and jocularly remarks, 'Keep up your bright swords; for, the dew will rust them.' He addresses Brabantio too, and firmly but respectfully asks him to be calm,—

Good Signior, you shall more command with yours
Than with your weapons.

But Brabantio cannot restrain himself and so lets himself go with angry abuse, reproach and denunciation against Othello,—

O thou foul thief ! where hast thou stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her * * *

PART VIII.

Brabantio is a born aristocrat, bred up in all the imperialistic notions and fashions of class-superiority in Republican Venice. He is an important Senator and very wealthy to boot. He is very popular among the brethren of his rank and very

influential with the Duke. In virtue of his position and age, he is looked up to with great reverence and awe by the general public. He wields much power and, in the words of Iago—

The magnifico is much beloved,
And hath in his effect a voice potential
As double as the Duke's;

or, as he (Brabantio) himself makes Roderigo understand, when he came, as he thought, to disturb him along with other ruffians,

My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

His ideas of the political and social privileges of his class are, however, narrow and peculiar. They are based upon racial superiority. According to him, authority should be owned and exercised only by the noblemen of Venice. All others are horrible aliens unfit to rule, and fit only to be kept down or shunned. As he himself later-on expresses—

If such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

By such sentiments, he shows his in-bred hatred against certain classes of men and his peculiar views of social privilege and individual liberty. Some, in his opinion, must ever be slaves and kept in thralldom, while non-Christians are unfit as a class to be the rulers of States. He is rash, haughty and domineering, inflated with false pride and prejudiced notions of self-importance.

To him, rank is everything, and 'Man' by himself, by his merit alone, is nothing. He is alien to the democratic thought or sentiment—a later growth—so finely expressed by the poet Burns,—

The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gold for all that.

* * * *

Give fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for all that;
Their tinsel show, and all that;
The honest man, tho' e'er so poor,
Is King of men for all that.

Ye see yon brikie, call'd a lord,
Who struts, and stares, and all that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for all that;
His riband, star, and all that;

* * *

The pith of sense, and pride of worth,
Are higher ranks than all that.

But Brabantio is born and brought up in an older school,—the school which groups men into higher and lower grades, not thro' virtue or merit, but thro' the mere accident of birth or the principle of inheritance, thro' belonging to a particular caste, creed or country.

Even marriages among the aristocrats should, he thinks, be strictly confined to the narrow corporation of the Venetian nobles. Girls of that class cannot and must not marry without the consent of their fathers, and even the choice of their partners in life must be left only to the determination of their parents. Brabantio gives vent to this feeling later-on before the Duke, when Desdemona declares that she married the Moor because she loved him. He is glad that he has no other child. for, with the experience gained from this child, he would be hard upon them; as he says—

I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For, thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.

True Love, he thinks, cannot have free passage and, if it travels beyond the borders of the Patrician circle, it is a serious corruption, almost a sacreligion. In the view of Brabantio, Love must not transcend the restrictions of Race and Color which, according to him, are barriers set up by Nature herself. In the case of his own daughter, he thinks it impossible for true Love to spring up between persons of two different colours or climes, and, so, he arrogantly asks Othello,

Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Would ever have
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou:

And he puts forth the same idea before the Duke in council, when he says that it is extremely doubtful whether a girl, 'being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,' would fall in love with a black man like the Moor,—

A maiden never bold;
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she,—in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, every thing,—
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!

Such a love, according to him, is unnatural, unreasonable and most improbable, and as he says,—

It is a judgment maim'd and most imperfect,
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature.

He therefore readily concludes, as he puts it to the Duke, that one

Must be driven
To find out practices of cunning Hell
Why this should be.

Hence, in his view, as he says to the Duke,
She is abused, stol'n from me and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.

He tells Othello as much, when he meets him in the Sagittary,
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion.

He therefore apprehends and attaches Othello
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.

And he orders his men accordingly to
Lay hold upon him; if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

Othello but readily consents to follow him and asks him,
Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

And Brabantio answers, saying, go
To prison, till fit time
Of law and course of direct session
Call thee to answer.

But, hearing that the Duke was just then in council, 'in this time of the night,' he directs his followers to 'bring him away' to that place at once. 'I'll have 't disputed on,' he says; for, he is confident that his 'is not an idle cause'; and

The Duke himself
Or any of my brothers of the State,
Cannot but find this wrong as 'twere their own.

And so, all proceed to the Senate house.

PART IX.

AT THE SENATE HOUSE.

(A) The Duke and the Senators are discussing about the Turkish Fleet, etc.

There, the Duke and the Counsellors are discussing 'a business of some heat,'--'something from Cyprus.' 'A dozen sequent messengers have arrived this very night at one another's heels,' from the galleys dispatched in succession by Signior Angelo of Rhodes and Signior Montano of Cyprus. They report about the

strength of the Turkish Armada or the invading fleet of ships, and about the direction and destination of its movement. As the Duke puts it,

There is no composition in these news
That gives them credit;

for, according to the letters severally received by the Duke and the different Senators, the number of the galleys or ships varies. It is, according to different reports, one hundred and seven, one hundred and forty; or two hundred. Again, a messenger comes in and reports that the hostile fleet proceeds against Rhodes, while another brings the news that

The Ottomites
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes
Have there enjoined them with an after fleet,

Of thirty sail; and now they do re-stem
Their backward course bearing with frank appearance
Their purposes toward Cyprus.

So, they all conclude that, in spite of the varying reports,
Do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

(B) Brabantio's Charges against Othello.

It is at this juncture that Brabantio and Othello arrive at the Senate House, and the Duke, seeing the latter in the company, at once eagerly exclaims,

Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy, Ottoman

Then, seeing Brabantio also, he apologises to him for not noticing him earlier, and informs him that

We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

In reply, Brabantio states,

So did I yours;
Neither my place nor aught I heard of business
Hath raised me from my bed, nor doth the general care
Take hold on me;

for,—as he explains the reason for his coming there,—

My particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'er-bearing nature
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

And, to the Duke who enquires the cause of it, he explains how his daughter has been 'abused, stolen and corrupted by spells and medicines.' The Duke, not knowing the culprit, and in his high regard for Brabantio refers him to

The bloody book of law (which)
 You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
 After your own sense, (against the culprit),
 Yea, tho' our proper son stood in your action.

Brabantio thanks the Duke humbly for it, and points out—
 Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
 Your special mandate for the State affairs
 Hath hither brought.

Every one is surprised that Othello should have been the subject of such a charge, and so they all exclaim, 'We are sorry for't.' But the Duke, not being fully convinced, asks Othello what, in his part, he can say to this. So, Othello begins by confessing,—

That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter
 It is most true; true, I have married her.
 The very head and front of my offending
 Hath this extent, no more.

He then apologises for his defects as an eloquent or graceful speaker and pleads,

Rude am I in my speech,
 And little blest with the soft phrase of peace;

And therefore little shall I grace my cause
 In speaking for myself.

And he proceeds to give the following reasons for his supposed deficiency in his knowledge of the great world and in the art of speech,—

For, since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,—
 Till now some nine moons wasted,—they have used
 Their dearest action in the tented field;
 So, little of this great world can I speak,
 More than pertains to feats of broil and battle.

As to the accusation with which he is charged, viz., that he has used drugs, charms, conjuration and mighty magic to prevail over Desdemona's affections and win her love, an imperfect and unpractised speaker that he is, he says,

Yet, by your gracious patience,
 I will a round unvarnished tale deliver
 Of my whole course of love;
 And explain how I won his daughter.

But the disappointed Brabantio, whose mind is so prejudiced as to be incapable of thinking that Othello, a colored foreigner, could have won his fair-complexioned daughter, and that, too, by mere Love, interposes at this stage and reiterates his superstitious belief and conviction against him,—

I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjured to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

The Duke, however, is more sensible and reasonable, and does not easily believe in the accusation of Brabantio. In his view, beliefs in drugs, charms, witchcraft and the like, and the arguments based thereon, are but slender assumptions—'thin habits and poor likelihoods of modern seeming.' He therefore desires to have more cogent evidence,—'more certain and more overt test,' in order to prove him guilty.

Likewise, the first Senator asks Othello,

Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or, came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

(C) **Othello's Refutation of the Charge.**

Othello, who is conscious of his innocence and fair dealings, and who would like to have his version confirmed, beseeches them to

Send for the lady to the Sagittary,
And let her speak of me before her father.

He then gives them the further assurance of truth by freely and fearlessly courting the penalty of untruth or lying,—

If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office, I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

The Duke agrees to this reasonable request of Othello and asks him to 'fetch Desdemona hither.' Othello directs Iago, his Ancient, to conduct her hither. He then proceeds to tell the story of his love-affairs as honestly and truthfully as if he were making a confession before his God; or, to use his own words,—

As truly as to Heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

'Say it, Othello,' permits the Duke, and he commences the narration of his tale.

Othello informs the Council as to how he, as a General and friend, was liked and loved by Brabantio, who often invited him to his house and frequently questioned him to narrate the story of his life from year to year, even from his boyish days to the very

moment of their meeting. There he used to recount the checkered incidents and experiences of his life,—the several ‘battles, sieges and fortunes,’ that he passed through. He would speak of

Most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hard breadth ‘scapes, o’ the imminent deadly breach
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence

He also used to describe the incidents of ‘portance’ in his travel’s history, and would refer to ‘anties vast and deserts idle, rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven.’ He would also speak

Of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.

He then proceeds to describe how Desdemona would feel seriously inclined to hear his story,—

But still the house-affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She’d come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse.

Noticing this inclination on her part, he narrates how he

Took once a phant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intently.

Othello readily consented to comply with this request,

And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer’d.

The story being ended, she sympathised with him by sighing much and swearing that it was strange and pitiful, surpassingly strange and wondrously pitiful. Her romantic imagination and love of heroism were excited, and she experienced an attachment to him and began to love him. In indirect ways, consistent with feminine modesty, she expressed this to him, or, as he puts it before the Duke.—

She wish’d she had not heard it, yet she wish’d
That Heaven had made her such a man: she thank’d me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her.

Thus did she indicate that she loved him, and, as he says, ‘upon this hint I spake’ (of my love to her). This was the whole course of his love-affair,—

She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them.

This is the origin and growth of their mutual liking, love and admiration; as Othello concludes by saying,

This only is the witchcraft I have used.

The Duke is satisfied that Othello's version of his love-affair with Desdemona is plain, natural and true. He is convinced that the romantic and stirring nature of his experience would touch the heart of any maiden who had the capacity to appreciate and admire the manly qualities of Candour, Courage, Endurance and Heroism. In fact, as he expresses it, 'this tale would win my daughter too.'

Seeing that Othello is not guilty of any of the charges that Brabantio has rashly and angrily made against him, the Duke turns to him (Brabantio) and, by way of pacifying him, advises him to take up things as they are and get reconciled to them. 'Take up this mangled matter at the best,' he suggests, and, in support of his suggestion, quotes a familiar illustration. Rather than use their bare hands, men use their weapons, even if broken.

(D) Desdemona arrives and explains.

Brabantio, however, is still not convinced of Othello's innocence; nor can he so easily reconcile himself to the situation, as advised by the Duke. He is still certain that Othello did practise some cunning art against his daughter and that, in the narration of his love story, he has simply lied. Hence, he is sure that, if she be allowed to speak, the truth will be out, and, as Desdemona has already arrived, he plays to the Duke to let her speak, and ends by saying that,

If she confess that she was half the wooer
Destruct on on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man.

And himself turning to her, he asks her,—

Come hither, gentle mistress,
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

Knowing the importance of the occasion and the necessity for the enquiry, the young maiden, naturally modest, now summons up her courage and rises to the height of her feminine dignity and self-defence. She knows that any false version on her part of her love-affair with Othello would, not only jeopardise his position, but even lead her to life-long misery. She has deliberately chosen this man for her partner in life, and it is now her duty to save him from the critical and risky situation in which her

father has placed him. At the same time, she is not unmindful of the benefits she has hitherto received from her father. He is the author of her being, and to him she owes all the education, training and the care of her life from her infancy. So, she must not be ungrateful to him; and hence, when questioned by him, she feels herself placed in a delicate and dubious position. Therefore, with grateful reverence to her father, and in all affectionate love to her husband, she declares to her enquiring parent, 'I do perceive here a divided duty,'—duty to you as my father, and duty to him (Othello) as my husband. Turning to her father, she says in a conciliating and respectful tone,—

My noble father,
To you, I am bound for life and education.
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter:

Then, pointing to her husband,—'But here's my husband,' and, while I respect you, to him also from now I am bound. While, as your daughter, I freely acknowledge my duties and obligations to you; as a loving wife, I must now own and act up to my duties to my husband, having cast in my lot to live with him as a partner of his life. After all, I am acting towards him as my mother acted towards you,

And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord.

(E) Brabantio's Charge is proved false; but he is still sore
and angry.

Such a declaration by Desdemona settles the whole matter. She has herself deliberately and knowingly chosen Othello for her husband. She has not been forced, duped or beguiled by any drug or charm. Othello is now freed from the accusations levelled against him by Brabantio; and the latter has nothing more to complain of, or none else to proceed with. Hence, addressing the Duke, he says

I have done.
Please it your Grace, on to the State-affairs.

Turning to the Moor, he says,
I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which.....with all my heart
I would keep from thee.

Looking to Desdemona, and reflecting on her choice of a dark foreigner for her husband (with whom she ran away to marry him in secret), he says that he is glad that he has no other child, for

he would subject them to harsher treatment. He would prove a more tyrannical father to them. To use his very words,—

For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For, thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.

But, happily, he is now saved from that cruel need.

(F) **The Duke tries to reconcile Brabantio.**

The Duke notices that Brabantio is much disappointed and dejected. He therefore tries to pacify him by certain well-known homely truths or maxims of common-sense, prudence and wisdom. He says,—1. When the remedies whereby we hope to repair our grievances are found to be helpless, then the only way to end our miseries is to reconcile ourselves to the worst. 2. There is no use pining over our past troubles; for, it only multiplies our sorrows. 3. Patience is the only cure for our mental dejection, when through misfortune we lose our all. And, in support of these moral truths, he quotes a familiar illustration,—

The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Brabantio immediately retorts that, if by cheerful acceptance of our loss we do not feel it, then let the Turk take away Cyprus, and we shall smile and feel no loss; or, as he bluntly and beautifully puts it,

So, let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not so long as we can smile.

Then, he tests the truth of the wise words of the Duke, and says that he feels no pain who takes it calmly; but no amount of helpless quietness is of use to him who will not actively forbear his sufferings. To such a one, miseries are keener felt, since sorrows are taken as punishments imposed. Much depends upon the attitude of Mind, and these words are words only. They are applicable either way, and may or may not cure the sorrows of people. By themselves they are useless; and as he puts it,—

But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.

(G.) **The Duke's Orders to Othello to proceed at once.**

The enquiry into the matter of Othello's marriage having ended, the Duke now resumes the consideration of the State-matters which have so hastily brought him and his counsellors to that place, at that part of the night. Addressing Othello, he says that 'the Turk makes for Cyprus with a most mighty preparation.' No

doubt in Cyprus, there is Montano, the Governor—‘a substitute of most allowed sufficiency,’ who can be relied on for the defence of the place. But Othello, apart from his knowledge of ‘the fortitude of the place,’ is one on whom public ‘opinion—a sovereign mistress of effects—throws a more safer voice.’ Hence, the Duke appoints him to the command straight-away, since, as he makes him understand later, ‘the affair cries haste, and speed must answer it;’ while the first Senator intimates to him, ‘You must away to-night.’ The Duke also asks Othello to hasten up,—‘You must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes,’ (meaning the happiness of his newly-wedded life) ‘with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition’ that very night, to Cyprus against the Turks. And Othello, like a true soldier, is not daunted by the hardness of the task or the suddenness of the call. He is not softened in his heart or checked in his duty by his ardent love for Desdemona. He is quite used to the hardships of rigorous and exacting military life, or the ‘tyrant custom’ as he calls it; and so he says,

I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness.

Therefore, he readily and willingly obeys the Ducal command, and is prepared immediately to undertake these ‘present wars against the Ottomites.’

(H) Desdemona’s Request (to go to Cyprus) is backed up by Othello and granted by the Duke.

Othello is not, however, unmindful of his wife too. He desires her to be well-provided and cared-for during his absence. He is particular about her habitation and comfort, as will suit her birth and breeding. He therefore addresses the Duke on this affair,—

Most humbly, therefore, bending to your State,
I crave fit disposition for my wife,
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.

The Duke suggests that she might stay with her father. But Brabantio says that he will not have it so; nor will Othello; nor Desdemona, who gives her reason for her refusal, saying,—

* * * I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts
By being in his eye.

Next, Desdemona begs of the Duke to grant her permission to make a request; and, when he consents, she proceeds to express her desire, by saying,—

I did love the Moor to live with him;
 * * * My heart's subdued
 Even to the very quality of my lord.
 And, to his honours and his valiant parts,
 Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

Having thus become entirely subdued, she desires her love to be constant, close and life-long ; and she knows that it can be so only if she lives with him. It was owing to the depth and intensity of her love for this grand character, this Hero, that she has discarded her country and custom, wealth and rank, Venetian birth and breeding. It is true that her wedded Hero is a foreigner, of different colour and of different clime; and that he may possibly have slightly different manners, habits and customs. But these are distinctions on surface, as the human heart is substantially the same in all countries and climes. Her marriage with him has effected an absolute change or revolution in her life; surely, it was not to satisfy a passing whim, or any sentiment of a short duration. It was but to love him for ever and to live with him for ever. Nay, the very course of life she has thus chalked out for herself may indicate her desire and determination to others. As she puts it,—

I did love the Moor to live with him,
 My downright violence and storm of fortunes
 May trumpet (this) to the world.

Hence, 'If I be left behind,' and 'he go to the war,' she says that she will, not only have to be 'a moth of peace,' supporting 'a heavy interim by his dear absence,' but also, which is the more important, 'the rites for which I love him are bereft me.' Therefore, she begs, 'let me go with him.'

Othello also joins his voice to hers in prayer, and requests the Duke and the Senators to 'let her have your voices' or votes. But, at the same time, he discerns a possible objection on their part. They might suspect him to neglect his legitimate duties, if his wife were to be with him—particularly as he is but newly married. Hence, to clear away any fears on that score, and without waiting to be questioned, he immediately follows with this assurance that, if he also joined his request with hers,

'Twas not to please the palate of my appetite,
 Nor to comply with heat, * * *
 But to be free and bounteous to her mind.

As for himself, he says,

And Heaven defend your good souls, that you think
 I will your serious and great business scant,
 For she is with me.

And his reasons for this assurance are that he is well-advanced in years,—'the young effects in me defunct;' that, being a well-tried

soldier, he knows his duties well; that he is sufficiently sobered and experienced, and will not allow his Passions ever to over-ride his Reason, or mar his name and fame which he has so well and zealously earned; and that if, at any time, he be found remiss in his duties, let him be mocked and ridiculed and let his good name suffer;—

Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation.

Hearing these assurances and reasons, the Duke says, 'Be it as you shall privately determine.' He is more anxious about the defence of Cyprus and the immediate departure of Othello to that place. 'The affair cries haste and speed must answer it,' says he to the latter; and the first Senator also gives the same imperative direction—'You must away to-night.' 'With all my heart,' replies Othello. The Duke asks him to

Leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.

And Othello in reply states,

So please your Grace, my Ancient;
A man he is of honesty and trust:
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good Grace shall think
To be sent after me.

(I) The Close of the Senate Meeting.

The meeting of the Council closes, and the Duke bids 'good night' to every one. As he departs, he once more offers words of advice to Brabantio. According to him, Character is more important than Color, and Othello is a man of high Character. His words are suggestive and mean that Brabantio should get himself reconciled to his son-in-law, and look, not to his colour, but to his virtues. To put the same in the pithy manner of the Duke,

If Virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

Every one leaves the Council chamber; and, as each one parts company, he speaks to Othello, wishing him well and advising him to treat his wife ever kindly. 'Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well,' says the first Senator. But Brabantio, not yet pacified, passes this parting, ill-humored and suggestive remark to him about his wife,—

Look to her Moor, if thou hast eyes to see;
She has deceived her father, and may thee.

The father is old, angry and disappointed ; and nothing better can be expected from him than these words of resentment and spite, —words which, in their concluding part, are wholly false,—words which are capable of being used and are, in fact, effectively so used afterwards by a malignant devil to damn his daughter's character and life.

Othello, the loving husband, the high-minded and generous soul, however, replies in quite a different strain. No, he says, I am ready to stake my very life upon her fidelity,—

My life upon her faith !

(J) Othello asks Iago and his wife to escort Desdemona.

Othello then entrusts the safe conduct of Desdemona to Cyprus to the care of his Ancient, 'honest' Iago, whom he also asks to allow his wife, Emilia, to attend on her. Then he retires with his wife to spend 'but an hour of love, of wordly matters and direction' with her, before his departure to the scene of war.

PART X.

Roderigo and Iago.

Things are moving fast and events follow one another in quick succession. Desdemona elopes with Othello and marries him in secret. Brabantio's charge of witchcraft against him falls to the ground, and the marriage is declared in the open Council to be the result of mutual and natural Love. It receives even the Ducal confirmation, and instructions are given for her departure and safe voyage to Cyprus. All these occur in one single night.

As for Roderigo, who has been expecting and contriving to win Desdemona for days and days past, he now feels balked. All his expectations have hitherto been in vain ; and his money, frequently given to Iago to help him in his suit, has been a mere waste. He has now the mortification of seeing, not only Desdemona being married to another, but even her settled departure from Venice altogether. He has been, and is still, so infatuated in his love for her that he seems to have no other goal in life except to marry her. Now that there is no more chance of winning her, he seems to have lost all purpose and pleasure in life. So, he thinks that to live any further is only to face disappointment and misery. In his own words,—

I confess it is my shame to be so fond ; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

And hence, 'it is silliness to live when to live is torment;' therefore, he thinks of putting an end to his life by drowning ; or, as he puts it,—'then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.'

Before, however, actually committing suicide, Roderigo intends to inform his resolve to Iago,—his friend, philosopher and guide. So, he seeks him out after the Ducal meeting closes, and finds him alone.

'Iago!' he calls out sadly. Iago easily guesses the trend and movement of his mind. He knows that he has come there on some desperate purpose, and he even quickly discerns that he is not unlikely to find fault with him (Iago) for not helping him as he has so often promised. So, Iago must now wean him from the idea or belief that he has betrayed him. He must, in addition, divert his mind from any desperate resolve that he might have made. And, above all, now that Iago is to leave for Cyprus, he must, for his own selfish ends, so arrange as not to lose touch and company with him, for, as he puts it later-on in his soliloquy,—'Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.'

Hence, when Roderigo addresses him and calls him by his name, he adopts a pleasing, affable and patronising attitude. In terms of flattery, in a tone of coaxing, and as if out of parental kindness, he speaks and deals with him. He knows that the man he deals with, though now annoyed and even desperate, is after all a simple fool, a gull, who can be easily dissuaded, instigated, or won over. So, when Roderigo calls him 'Iago!', he flatteringly replies, 'What say'st thou, noble heart?' 'What will I do, thinkest thou?' asks the disappointed fool, in a tone of annoyance, to make his friend know that he has made a desperate resolve. And Iago, sneeringly, but in seeming earnestness, and as a parent, who would treat and advise his worried or fretful child, tells him, 'Why, go to bed and sleep.' Not relishing the advice of his friend, he at once comes out and in a voice quivering with mortification, reveals his determination,—

I will incontinently drown myself.

Taking it jocularly, and in the same apparently friendly or parental attitude, Iago admonishes him by saying,—

If thou dost, I shall never love thee after.

And, as if he were anxious to know the cause of Roderigo's worried frame of mind, he further questions him, 'Why, thou silly gentleman?' Then Roderigo tells him that he has no more interest in life; and, under such circumstances, 'to live' will only be to court and suffer perpetual misery,—

It is silliness to live, when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die, when death is our physician.

It is now apparent to Iago that Roderigo is very earnest about carrying out his determination. He must therefore no longer content himself with merely speaking to him in tones of raillery or affection. He must show him some

convincing reasons that the desperate course, Roderigo proposes to follow, is not fraught with profit to himself, but that, if he lives, he has still everything to gain. All is not lost yet; and, so long as life lasts, there is hope of success to the very end. So, he begins with certain palpable and clear truths which are of common knowledge, next, he passes on to stoical philosophy which treats Life's goods and its passions as but mere trifles, not worth trying for and owning; then, he dwells on the superiority of Man in virtue of the controlling capacity of his Reason over Passion; finally, he shows him the impossibility of continued happiness for the newly-married couple, in view of the disparity between them in age, race, color and custom, and also in view of the weakness of flesh under which Youth (referring to Desdemona) labours and consequently demands a change for satisfaction. He therefore concludes that, in such a case, Roderigo can still win Desdemona over.

Iago's advice is sound and is based upon convincing arguments; but it is after all intended, not so much for the selfless love for Roderigo's life and prosperity, as for the final satisfaction of his own selfish greed for money; and for this object, he desires to make the fool his perennual purse to draw from.

When Roderigo tells him that he is resolved to commit suicide by drowning, since his life has become a torment, Iago cries out, 'O, villainous!' He thereby means that it is a horrible course of action to think of, and more horrible still to execute. He then turns to his own personal experience and says that, in all the twenty eight years of life which he has passed through, he has never found man that knew how to love himself. He means that men are generally weak-minded, incapable of facing the stern realities and the ruggedness of life. They are stupid and frivolous, and are very easily frightened by the rough course, the toil and turmoil, the work and worry, which life involves. Such people easily lose faith in themselves; and, not being self-reliant or resourceful, they think of ending their incidental worry or misery, real or imaginary, by ending their very lives. Referring to himself, he says that he would never commit such an act. If he did, he would be behaving not in a manly manner deserving of a rational being. Nay, he would rather prefer to be an animal, a baboon, than to be such a craven, cowardly man. Referring to Roderigo, who now thinks of killing himself for no worthier object than a mere girl, he thus expresses his own attitude in figurative language,—

Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Roderigo, however, is not capable of attaining such a superior mentality. He belongs to the ordinary run of mankind, and is hence incapable of self-reliance and self-determination, and lacks intelligence and other qualities to shape the events of the world to suit his purposes. He would rather allow himself to drift down the

current of low and common human passions and desires than struggle against it. He is weak, and he readily confesses his weakness to his strong-minded friend.

What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

Iago catches the word 'Virtue' and dwells upon it at length. According to him, there is no 'Virtue' as distinct and separate from 'Vice'. Things are at once virtuous or vicious, according to the meaning given to them by different men under different circumstances. There is no established 'Virtue' as against settled 'Vice.' Moral Truths are not established facts, permanently settled and fixed for man's guidance. Commandments and doctrines, rules and regulations, that attempt to make and keep men moral (as against immoral conduct), are not unalterable. They owe their origin to no superior Authority, incapable of being reached by man; and, therefore, they are not beyond human capacity to amend or end, as needed by altered and altering circumstances and times. Therefore, to think of 'Virtue' as a fixed entity, and to rely on it as a fixed guide for all time is mere nonsense. Hence, says Iago, 'Virtue, a fig!'. According to him, 'Man is the maker of his Destiny and the architect of his Fortune'; or as he would put it, 'tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus.' He continues the same theme further and exemplifies his statement by a common but sensible metaphor,—

Our bodies are gardens; to the which our Wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry,—why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our Wills.

Man is compounded of Reason and Passion. The former asserts itself as Will-Power, and checks him from falling a victim to 'raging motions,' 'carnal stings' and 'unbitted lusts', induced by Passion or 'Sensuality' that is embedded in the very 'blood and baseness of our natures'. Or, as Iago would put it, human life is like unto a balance, of which one scale is made of Reason and the other of Passion. Each one tries to dominate or preponderate over the other, and,

If the balance of our lives had not one scale of Reason to poise another of Sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions.

It lies with Man to use his Reason as against his Passion, rather than depend on and look to some supposed pre-destined Course or Fate. As Iago says, emphasizing the importance of Reason,—

But we have Reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts.

In this sense, according to Iago's forced and confused philosophy, even Love is no sentiment, separate from, and extraneous to,

Man. It is a part of our 'lust' or 'sensuality,' and not induced and set up by Cupid, the god of Love, or the winged child of Heaven. Hence, there is no reason why men should come within its grip and, like Roderigo, acknowledge their weakness before it. It comes from nowhere but from within. It is a part and parcel of our very nature,

It (Love) is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the Will.

It therefore lies in us to love or to be loved, or not at all; and, addressing Roderigo, he dilates that to commit suicide for the sake of love is unmanly. He asks him to give up that idea, and rather than drown himself, he had better drown useless, pestering little animals that tease men. He says,

Come, be a man; drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies!

Having thus moralized, for the benefit of his pupil, on the capacity of Man and his power to make or mar himself, Iago next proposes a certain plan to Roderigo whereby he can yet gain his end,—'defeat thy favour with an usurped beard;' and 'follow thou the wars!'

He asks him to adopt this course, so that he may be where Desdemona will be; and where, when an opportunity occurs, he may secure his object. That such an opportunity will occur is certain; and, in support of his conviction, Iago states, in reference to Desdemona's marriage with Othello, that she has gone against all moderating and restricting influences, and consequently will soon have to suffer a reaction in her choice and retrace her steps. According to him,

It was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration.

And hence, he says,—

It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor;

And the reason for this is two-fold:—(1) one is that, owing to the disparity of age between her and her husband,

When she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice; Therefore, 'she must have change,' and 'she must change for youth.' (2) The other reason is, 'These Moors are changeable in their wills;' and hence,

The food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida.

Even if, owing to these causes, the expected breach does not occur, then comes out Iago with dark hints and partial revelations of his evil plans. He makes him understand that, by the use of his own Intellect, he will create such a situation; and then, Roderigo, being a youth for whom she will come to crave, can have her for himself. Iago is capable of producing such a breach between the

married couple. Firstly, he is a man of 'wits' or intellectual sharpness that can conceive of and execute any plan, however wicked, cruel and dangerous in its nature or consequences. Secondly, the married pair have, in his view, nothing common or binding between them to keep them constantly together. While one is an 'erring Barbarian,' the other is a 'super-subtle Venetian.' Thirdly, according to him, the sacredness of religion, in whose name and under whose sanction their marriage was consecrated, is no more than mere 'sanctimony'; and the 'vow' of constancy and fidelity to each other which they made on the occasion of their wedding is but 'frail.' Therefore, says Iago,

If sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring Barbarian and a super-subtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of Hell (to undo), thou shalt enjoy her.

But, on the other hand, as Iago observes,—

If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning;

finally, he gives his advice mixed with this admonition,—

Seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

Therefore, in his inimitable, vulgar but expressive phraseology, in order to dissuade Roderigo from his stupid thought of suicide, he sneeringly remarks,—

A pox of drowning thyself!, it is clean out of the way.

Roderigo is now convinced that he too, as Iago has told him, can make or mar his fortunes, if only he lives and tries. He has come to know that all that Iago has told him about the break between Desdemona and Othello is not impossible. Therefore, he thinks of going to Cyprus so that he may be near enough to Desdemona. Still, he is doubtful of his own ability. He therefore needs some one to aid him. That one can be no other than Iago; but, he thinks, he is unreliable. Hence, to assure himself of Iago's help for the future, and of the constancy and sincerity of it, he asks him, half in doubt and half in hope,—

Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

'Certainly,' says Iago, 'thou art sure of me'; and to convince him that he would seek and work only for Roderigo's gain in winning Desdemona over for him, he repeats his own hatred of the Moor, and his desire for vengeance against him,—

I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor.

And, to induce him further to depend on him (Iago) entirely, he proceeds,—

My cause is hearted; thus hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him.

And the way to wreak their vengeance on Othello is for Roderigo 'to cuckold him' i.e., to make Othello believe that his wife is carrying on with others. By doing so, says Iago,—

Thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport.

For bringing about this desired end, Iago is already maturing plans which are, however, still in his mind, and which he will put into practice only in course of time. To quote his words,—

There are many events in the womb of Time, which will be delivered.

With this, Roderigo is fully satisfied; and, for the time, they part company. But, as he goes a few steps off, Iago once again calls him and warns him,—

No more of drowning, do you hear?

And Roderigo now assures him, 'I am changed.'

Iago, however, has not been altogether selfless in all his promises and plans of help to Roderigo. His one reason for inducing him to go to Cyprus is to keep him by his side, so that he (Iago) may get money from him whenever needed. Iago is avaricious and Roderigo is wealthy; one is keen-witted and the other is dull-headed. Iago notes this contrast and thinks of enriching himself at Roderigo's cost. Throughout his prolonged conversation, there is no para, no passage which does not end with 'money,' and no part where he does not harp upon it. He intermingles every topic with 'money,' and implies it in every argument,—

Put money in thy purse; or, put but money in thy purse;.....

Fill thy purse with money; or, therefore, put money in thy purse;

Go, make money; or, Go, provide thy money.....

Such are the phrases with which he fills his talk with Roderigo. He constantly and cleverly duns into his ears the necessity for providing himself with money much more than any other thing. Even when Roderigo bids farewell and departs, Iago, after giving him his last bit of advice, once more repeats,—

Go; provide thy money. Adieu!

Roderigo easily falls into Iago's trap; and, as he parts company with the latter, informs him of his resolution to make money, and the way by which he will make it. 'I'll go sell all my land,' he says, not knowing that the proceeds thereof will find their way into Iago's pocket.

PART X.

Iago's Soliloquy.

Roderigo departs. And Iago, left alone, takes stock of the situation afresh. He is the master schemer, the supreme plotter and the prime mover of the events and incidents of the Drama. He makes

every small incident turn to his advantage and to the attainment of his goal. He finds a use for everything and a purpose for every person. He concocts and settles, in the secret chambers of his inventive brain, a particular end that would serve his selfish needs and satisfy his personal desires. And he makes every material object and every human being contribute to the fulfilment of that end or purpose.

This purpose, he keeps all to himself. He allows no one to know his secrets; and, while he presses every one into his service, he permits none to become aware of them. The settlement of the final goal, the formulation of the plans and policies by which that goal is to be reached, the weighing and assaying of persons and events, and the fixing of localities and duties for each and all,—these he does all alone, with no other associate or accomplice than his individual self. As frequently as he is left alone, he indulges in his habit of self-communion,—reviewing the situation as it then is, and the progress so far made. Now that he is alone after Roderigo's departure, he has got the opportunity for introspection,—of talking to himself, and revolving in his mind what he thinks of doing and how he intends doing it.

The main purpose, as he conceives it, of his life and action now, is to satisfy his vengeance against Othello. It was he who offered the post of Lieutenantcy to Cassio in preference to himself, though he (Iago), as he thinks, was fit for it in every way. Othello, therefore, in his scheme of things, is the main culprit. 'I hate the Moor,' speaks Iago to himself in the fulness of his wicked and vindictive heart. As for Cassio, Othello's favourite, he thinks of him in another strain. Iago will use him as a tool for the purpose of wreaking his vengeance against the Moor. And, though thus but a secondary person, he too must not be let alone. It is he who has taken Iago's legitimate place. (*viz.* the Lieutenantcy). Therefore, he (Iago) must get that place. And to do this, he must get Cassio removed from his office, and then use him against the Moor. If he can do these two things,—first, to hit Cassio; and then, through him, to hit Othello,—he will, as he boastfully puts it, be pluming up his will in 'double knavery.'

But a scruple flashes across his mind. The world about him may not accept his complaint of favouritism against Othello as a sufficient cause to justify his 'hitting' of the Moor. After all, the General is the proper person to find and fix up suitable candidates for particular places; and the world will go only by his decision. So, he must think of and bring in a more justifiable, at any rate, a more plausible, reason. And what can serve the purpose better than the rumour, though unsupported, that Othello misbehaved with his wife, Emilia? It may not after all be true; but Iago will take it as true, for 'surety' as he says, and use it as a cause for his revenge against Othello. As Iago puts it

in his soliloquy,—

It is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office ; I know not if 't be true ;
But I for mere suspicion in that kind
Will do as if for surety.

How is he to put this supposed and self-justifying reason into operation ? If Othello is believed to have spoiled Emilia's chastity, Iago will make Othello believe that his wife (Desdemona) is unchaste to him. But how unchaste and with whom ? This too Iago must now settle. No better person can he think of than Cassio to serve this purpose. Against him, too, he has his feelings of envy and hatred for filling the office of Lieutenantcy. Besides, he has already thought of using him as a tool to hit Othello with. Yes, that is a good plan, and, as Iago puts it,—

Cassio's a proper man, * * *
He hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected ; framed to make women false.

Therefore, Iago will set to work, and—

After sometime, to abuse Othello's ear
That he (Cassio) is too familiar with his wife.

Can Iago bend the Moor, who is a hard soldier, to believe his story ? Can he succeed in poisoning his ears with the tale of his wife's infidelity with Cassio ? But Iago feels his way and finds the door open, because

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so

Othello is of a trustful and generous nature, unfit to distinguish between reality and pretence, and therefore takes appearances, affectations and professions for truths or sincerities. Before him, every one is plain and honest who but affects to be so. Hence, to take advantage of his trustful disposition and to delude him into wicked paths and crooked ends is not difficult. Iago has already found this out and has consequently wormed himself into his confidence and good-will. Othello has therefore already entrusted him with the important function of conveying State-matters from the Duke to him in Cyprus. Nay, his confidence in him is so great that he has even asked him to accompany and escort his wife, Desdemona, to that island. He has implicit trust in Iago and has formed a high opinion of his loyal and reliable character. Even to the Duke and before the open Council, he has clearly expressed himself to this effect,—

So please Your Grace, my Ancient ;
A man he is of honesty and trust ;
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful Your Good Grace shall think
To be sent after me,

Thus, in Othello's view, Iago is firmly established as honest, honorable and trustworthy. It is not impossible, therefore, for Iago to turn his master to any advantage that will suit his wicked ends. Says Iago,—

He holds me well ;
The better shall my purpose work on him ;

And, further, to use his characteristic expression,—

Will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are.

Yes, Iago's plans are now formed, and his end fixed. 'I have't. It is engender'd.' he says. They are wicked plans, but as yet they exist only in his own mind,—in the realm of his imagination. They have yet to be produced and translated into action. When brought forth, they are certain to end in terrific and calamitous conclusions. To show that he is fully conscious of the wickedness of his schemes, to point out the secrecy in which they are just now shrouded, and to denote the appalling end to which they will lead, Iago, boasting of his knavery, soliloquises thus,—

Hell and Night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

But what about Roderigo ? Has he no place in the general scheme of Iago's ordering ? Is this wealthy simpleton not to serve any purpose in the achievement of Iago's goal ? True, Iago has asked him to proceed to Cyprus. True, there he has promised to procure for him, early and easily, Desdemona who would soon, as Iago has made him understand, get disgusted with Othello and look for a youth,—for more agreeable companionship and satisfaction of her tastes and desires. But is Iago earnest about it ? Has he not, in his soliloquy, thought of conjoining Cassio rather than Roderigo with Desdemona ? In that light, all the promises he has made to Roderigo are but plausible make-believes, invented quickly and expressed cleverly. Roderigo is not to have a place in the fore-front, but only behind the scenes, of his operations. He is to serve more as his frequent, though at times unwilling pay-master, for the mere satisfaction of being fed with alluring promises and hopes. In detailing his plans and holding out the prizes to Roderigo for certain lines of action suggested, he has brought in the aid of his philosophy and reason. And, in doing so, he has indirectly but strongly conveyed to his friend's mind the potency of, and the necessity for, Money. In fact, by his sophistry and power of speech and persuasion, he has made him realize that, without money, Roderigo's cherished end could not be obtained. He has so much convinced him of the urgent need and importance of money that, as Roderigo parts from Iago, he openly tells him that he has changed his mind,—

I am changed ; I'll go sell all my land.

Thus, to feed Iago's unfathomable greed or to satisfy his ever-itching palm, is the only use and purpose that Roderigo fulfills in this drama. As Iago gloatingly remarks immediately after Roderigo's departure, on his power to exploit such fools,—

Thus do I ever 'make my fool' my purse.

Poor Roderigo has very little of wit or wisdom, tho' with some beauty of person. He is a well-meaning, moneyed simpleton of the average type, but in the grip of a sickly, uncontrollable emotion. And Iago, the shark, is trying to use him for his own food,—to induce him to pay heavily and frequently towards his own selfish schemes. And thus, with Iago, the sport of beguiling Roderigo of his money, by all the arts of coaxing, flattering, holding out false baits, and threatening, has become quite a pleasure; and to get that money, as often as needed and as much as required, is a profit. So says Iago,—

For, I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe
But for my sport and profit.

Thus, by his thoughts, words and deeds is Iago's psychology unfolded to our view. By this soliloquy, he makes clear his intention to use Roderigo throughout as a tool for his pleasure and profit,—supplying him with money, doing his bidding and carrying out his plans. As for the other persons,—Othello and Cassio,—they are marked and selected to satisfy his vindictive and envious emotions,—the one as the end, and the other as the means.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
ACT I.

The First Act is the Introductory Act which prepares and presents the general outline of the Drama. (A) It shows the Main Incidents which lead to, or are utilised for, the great Tragic End that ensues in the Fifth Act. (B) It brings on the scene the Important Persons—the Hero, the Heroine, and a few others—from whose actions or words that Tragic End is to spring. In dealing with these, it incidentally throws out hints and general indications of the main Motive Power which is to direct and converge such deeds or utterances towards the great catastrophe.

(A) The Main Incidents.

Othello appoints Cassio to Lieutenantcy instead of Iago. Othello elopes with Desdemona and marries her in secret, to the mortification of Roderigo whose offers for her hand were often rejected. Brabantio charges Othello before the Duke with having deluded his daughter with magic and other unlawful means. Othello is acquitted on the ground of natural and reciprocal love between him and the young lady. He is even honored by the offer of a special and dignified office in the State,—the defence of Cyprus. The Duke suggests Desdemona's stay with her father during her husband's absence, but the suggestion is dropped, as her request to follow her lord to that distant island is granted. Roderigo is despondent and thinks of suicide, but is diverted by Iago from his intention and is induced to follow Desdemona, providing himself with ample means.

The appointment, by a chief, of a particular person to a vacant subordinate post in the army; the secret love and marriage of an invited guest with the daughter of his host; the natural resentment of the father against his guest's misconduct; and his difficulty to reconcile himself with his son-in-law because he is of an alien race, even after the proof of the latter's honesty; the extreme despondency of a rejected suitor who is resolved on committing suicide, but is pacified and filled with hopes of future success by a friend of his;—such are the incidents presented in this opening Act. These have nothing extraordinary, dubious or ominous about them; for, they are like most other similar events that are of almost daily occurrence in this world. Many a place is being filled up, on preference or favouritism, with particular persons; and many a marriage in secret does take place, based on mutual love secretly cherished. Many a parent is disappointed by the wayward careers of his children; and many a love-stricken fop thinks of ending his life, but is encouraged and pulled up by his friends.

Though thus not uncommon, yet the events presented in this Act, like similar events in the broad world, contain prolific causes for ill-feeling of various kinds and degrees. They lead to Spite and Hate, Envy and Jealousy, Tyranny and Trouble, Anger and Revenge, Lust and Avarice. But they do not generally lead to so calamitous and appalling an end as in this Drama. Hate, Envy, and the like, are common-enough facts in this work-a-day life; yet, they pass off either quietly and unnoticed, appearing and melting away like a passing cloud in the mental sky, or, if they do stay and make mischief, the results are not of such a tremendous and terrible nature as those presented here. The reason for this difference is to be found in the absence or presence of a stupendous brain-power at the back of such balked feelings. Iago happens to have that power, aided by consummate cunning, to manipulate and magnify such ordinary events to such an extent as to cause them to lead to appalling and terrible results. Moles, in the hands of an inventive genius, become mountains, and grains of sand turn into bits of gold. So are the incidents of this opening Act in the hands of the great Iago,—their master-shaper or string-puller.

The incidents and events of this Act, therefore, contain materials enough for a great Tragedy. Othello's appointment of Cassio to Lieutenantcy, and his marriage with Desdemona are two such basic events. The one excites the hate and envy of Iago,—hate against Othello and envy against Cassio. The other, according to the-then prevailing notions of social morality, is obviously of a startling nature, though not unnatural or extraordinary; yet it is made cause enough to disturb the social calm.

The first incident serves as one of the causes, though not as the only cause, for Iago's resolve to ruin Othello and others. That it was of no insignificant import, at all events with Iago, he makes palpably clear to Roderigo when he says, 'Despise me, if I do not' (hate Othello). And he repeats the same sentiment later on, when Roderigo speaks of his determination to drown himself,—

I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor; my cause is hearted;.....Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him (Othello).

Thus, out of an innocent appointment to a particular post by an innocent General of a person who is also innocent, Iago is building up a terrific hate for 'revenge.' But what course that revenge will take, and when, and how far it will go, and how many it will involve,—all these yet remain in hiding. 'There are many events in the womb of Time, which will be delivered,' says Iago; but the material is supplied in this Act, and it awaits manipulation by the master-hand.

The second event also,—Desdemona's marriage—is a thing of no great significance from the view-point of the world at large. But it is unduly magnified by the malignity of a villain on one side, and by an aged, impetuous and emotional father on the other. It is construed to be an ill-suited and unsuitable union of opposing contrasts. She is a 'super-subtle Venetian,' and he is an 'erring Barbarian.' She is 'fair', and he is of a 'sooty bosom.' She is young, and he is of an advanced age, with the young affects in him defunct. She is 'tender,' and he is used to 'hardness' with 'a natural and prompt alacrity' for it. She is a Venetian noblewoman of high birth and bred to all the comforts of a settled and peaceful aristocratic home, and he is a Moor, 'an extravagant and wheeling stranger of here and everywhere.' Such a matrimony is, according to an old and excited father (Brabantio), 'in spite of nature, of years, of country, credit, everything,' or, in the view of Roderigo, the infatuated fool, it is 'a gross revolt'. Iago speaks of it as 'a violent commencement in her' or, as 'an error of her choice.'

But, after all, it was a love-affair between the parties themselves. They did deeply and genuinely love each other and would have lived peacefully and happily but for the meddlesome and mischievous interference of the outside world. Othello would have proved a good and loving husband, and Desdemona, a loyal, loving and devoted wife. Both have on several occasions sincerely declared their deep and genuine love for each other. Othello makes Iago understand at the Sagittary, 'I did love the gentle Desdemona.' Desdemona speaks of it before the Council,

I did love the Moor to live with him; my heart's subdued
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And, to his honours and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

The love between them is thus not of a superficial nature. It is deep-seated, constant and ardent. That this is so, both of them indicate by their own words. Othello says to Iago,

But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth.

Desdemona too, before the Duke in Council, gives vent to the same feeling of ardent love and to what extent she has gone in it, when she says,

That I did love the Moor.....
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world.

Society, however, is full of false values, false standards, and false conventions by which it judges things and appearances, and

not by true reasons or principles. There are persons in this world to whom Love, Truth, Justice, Pity, and the like, are but silly, superficial, and therefore, dispensable sentiments. What counts with them is, on the one hand, their tradition or prejudice of race, of country, of religion; their social, orthodox customs and conventions in which they have been born, brought up and trained; or, on the other, their self-interest before which all other people, or all other virtues and values, must give way.

Partly belonging to the first of this category, but wholly coming under the second, Iago forms a class of his own. To a man of his intellect,—modified and moderated by no warm sentiment, and therefore cold and self-centred,—Love is but 'a lust of the blood', an ingrained, animal, carnal desire that gains mastery by 'the permission of the Will'. He therefore denies the existence of any noble sentiment between Desdemona and Othello. He attributes her connection with him to the carnal craving of her body, and therefore he readily jumps to the conclusion that,—

It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor, (because he is far older than she).....She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice.

As for Othello, he says,—

These Moors are changeable in their wills: . . .The food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida.

Thus, the innocent marriage between the two sincere lovers is considered by Iago to be a fact of doubtful validity and of suspicious character and constancy, and, out of this supposed flaw or weakness, he attempts to ruin the relation and the happiness of Othello and Desdemona.

(B) The Important Persons.

Practically, every person, who is to play a part in the Tragedy, is brought out in this Introductory Act. Whether directly or otherwise, whether intentionally acting towards the end, or unknowingly acted on and guided towards it, all play their parts,—each, to all outward appearance, individually and independently, but all, unknowingly together and inter-dependently. None is a superfluous figure in the Drama; for, none is brought on the scene who does not contribute to the intended goal. Othello and Desdemona are the Hero and the Heroine of the play, out of whose conjugal relation and mutual affection, a fiend finds enough material for a tragic end. Unknowingly, they become victims to the machinations of a wicked plotter, and finally fall a prey to his premeditated, malignant vengeance. They are the chief figures round whom every body else turns and acts, and

towards whose catastrophic fall each contributes. Out of these two prominent characters, the Hero is set up against the Heroine and made to kill her and also kill himself. Cassio, Roderigo and Emilia are subordinate characters; and they are there to add to the volume and the vehemence of the situation, thereby increasing the appalling nature of the horrible result. They too are but unwilling tools and, when the purposes for which they are severally intended are over, they are also ended,—all except the first. Thus, every one acts and contributes to bring about the tragic close. But none does it with knowledge, except Iago, the prime-mover. He stands at the back of all,—thinking, planning and guiding every one by his leading strings into particular modes of behaviour,—for the sole purpose of satisfying his unhealthy, diseased and depraved, because untrained, emotions of Envy, Hate and Revenge.

In this Introductory Act, all these persons are presented with descriptive touches of their characters and actions.

First and foremost stands **OTHELLO**, the Hero. He is a Moor by birth and breeding, partly influenced through heredity by the beliefs, customs and manners of his race, and partly also by those of the Venetian State and Society in which he has moved. He has already given up his religion and has embraced Christianity which was the religion of the State. He is thus a happy blend of two civilizations. He is, however, of a darker complexion in comparison with that of the Venetians, and is therefore contemptuously referred to by the disappointed father of Desdemona as 'sooty'. Almost from his boyhood, 'since these arms of mine had seven years' pith', he has been a soldier, ever spending his time 'in the tented field.' He has travelled much 'from year to year,' in the course of which he has passed through 'most disastrous chances', in flood and field, in deadly breaches and in the hands of enemies. He has become so used to hardness and dangers, that his habit has acquired the strength of second nature in him; and, as he puts it,

I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness.

In consequence of his continuous military career, he says, though more in modesty than in strict truth, that he knows little of the world, not much of the elegance and etiquette of its social intercourse. As he describes himself,

And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;

And, therefore,

Rude am I in my speech,
And little blest with the soft phrase of peace.

This is only a modest estimate of himself ; but, in reality, we have evidence of a finished, clever and experienced soldier ; a good and effective conversationalist, as he is seen to be, in Brabantio's house, a cogent and convincing speaker, as before the Senate he is found to be, in self-vindication ; and a fairly good judge of men, events and things. But for these qualities, he would not be the General that he is.

He fetches his life and being from men of royal siege. He has rendered great services to the State of Venice in the past, and is conscious that they not only 'shall out-tongue' Brabantio's false 'complaints' against him, but shall place him in the high estimation of the Duke and the Senators. His reputation is so great that, as the Duke expresses it,—

Opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you, . . . (and, therefore,) we must straight employ you against the general enemy, Ottoman.

In character, as even Iago puts it in his soliloquy, 'the Moor is of a free and open nature.' He is incapable of cunning, much less of villainy, towards anybody. He is plain and honest, and considers others, too, as such. He knows no double-dealing in thought or deed ; and, whether referring to himself or to others, he is blunt and straight to the point. He is ardent in love, modest in self-praise, truthful in speech and confession, and courting or inflicting extreme penalties for self-error. Before the Duke in Council, he speaks as truly and solemnly as tho' he were making a confession of his sins before God, or to use his own words, 'as to Heaven I do confess the vices of my blood'. Again, if, after Desdemona's narration of their Love-affair, he is found to be false in his account, he asks the Duke not only to take away his office, but to 'let your sentence even fall upon my life.'

Being, however, of an honest, open and trustful nature, he is easily misled and wrought upon, living in a foul or uncongenial, social atmosphere. In a dishonest and wicked world, an honest and straight-forward person is a misfit. Here Othello, the good soul, is chosen by Iago, the devil, for his victim, to be sacrificed on the altar of his inborn hatred and malignity. Both Iago the knave, and Roderigo, the fool under the knave's instigation, join and conspire together to,—

Make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets ; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies ; though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't
As it may lose some colour.

The Hero has many good qualities ; but those very qualities are, alas, in an unsuitable environment, played upon in

secret for his 'undoing.' His 'free and open nature' is marked to be taken advantage of ; and, since he takes 'men honest that but seem to be so,' Iago worms himself into his good opinion and secretly plans to 'abuse his ear' by the tale of his wife's unchastity with Cassio. In this Act, this wicked plan is still only in the mind of Iago and nobody as yet knows anything of it.

DESDEMONA:—She is the Heroine of the play and is brought on the scene even from the very commencement of the First Act. She is the daughter of Brabantio, a very influential and wealthy Senator of Venice. She has been brought up in all the rigorous formalities, refined manners and restrictive etiquette of an aristocratic home. She is believed to be endowed with all the accomplishments of body and mind. All the world speaks well of her, except the villain Iago. (a) Roderigo, when informing Brabantio of her elopement with Othello, refers to her 'beauty' and 'wit', and speaks of her as 'your fair daughter.' (b) Brabantio utters words to the same effect when, at the Sagittary, he charges Othello with having deluded his daughter with magic and drugs. He speaks of her 'delicate youth,' and describes her as 'a maid so tender, fair and happy.' Before the Duke in Council, he further elaborates her qualities as 'being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense'; and as

A maiden never bold ;
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself ;

as a woman 'of years,' having inherited the manners 'of (her) country' and the 'credit' of her family. (c) Othello, too, at the Sagittary, before the arrival of the Duke's messengers and Brabantio's party, speaks of her to Iago as 'the gentle Desdemona,' and before the Duke refers to her as 'the lady' more than once. When ordered to proceed to Cyprus that very night, he expresses his anxiety with regard to his wife's place and manner of stay, referring in particular to 'her breeding' and therefore craving a 'fit disposition' for her with 'due reference of place and exhibition' and 'accommodation and besort'.

These qualities of hers—her wealth, wit and beauty—appear to have attracted the attention of many 'wealthy curled darlings' of her nation, but, being 'opposite to marriage,' she 'shunn'd' their offers. This, her father ascribes to her timidity and bashfulness. But it was really because she discovered that such young Venetians as offered themselves were unworthy of her love. She had a touch of heroism in her make-up and could appreciate heroism in others. She could love and would bestow her love only where it was worth and would be sincerely reciprocated. She saw such worth in Othello ; and, though he was a Moor, a foreigner, she

readily and spontaneously admired and loved him. In explanation of her love for Othello, she speaks thus—

I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And, to his honours and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.

Her own heroism, and the admiration of it in others, eminently fitted her for adventure, from the dangers and fears of which she would not lag or shrink. Having once loved Othello and resolved to marry him, she abruptly and fearlessly leaves her parental home, and at the 'odd-even and dull watch of the night', goes to the Sagittary to precipitate her pre-arranged marriage, escorted by 'no worse nor better guard, but with a knave of common hire, a gondolier.' It is the same spirit of daring adventure that induces her once again to face the dangers of a sea-voyage and follow her husband to the distant Cyprus, though it was a seat of war, rather than lead an idle and passive life at home. She will be 'a moth of peace' supporting 'a heavy interim,' if left behind.

She has clear notions of her duty, and clearly discerns where and in what manner she is to discharge it. When in the Council chamber, in the presence of the Duke and the Senators, her father questions her,—

Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

then, fully discerning her duty as a daughter and as a wife, she, boldly and in a clear tone, answers him,

I do perceive here a divided duty.

To her father, she says,—

To you, I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you; you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter:

As for Othello, though a Moor whom she has newly wedded, she declares,

..... But, here's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord.

Thus is Desdemona portrayed in this Act—a maid, tender of body, but keen in her emotions, endowed with wit and beauty, bestowing her love where she thinks love is due, and possessing and exhibiting a heroic spirit when and where it was demanded. Otherwise, she is usually modest, gentle and innocent, thoroughly docile and yielding, before the object of her love.

Dark plans and schemes, however, are being engendered by wicked persons behind her back, even from the commencement of her married life, to make her the victim of baseless suspicion and jealousy. Iago, for his own nefarious ends, desires to make her appear unchaste to her husband, by connecting her with Cassio in guilty intercourse. No worse crime can be thought of against this perfectly pure soul. Much capital is made of her marriage with the Moor by Iago, the mischief-maker. He gives out to Roderigo that, for a certainty, 'she must change for youth.' Whether he really believed it or whether it was only a fiction or plea manufactured for deluding Roderigo with, is not quite clear.

CASSIO:—Not much is known of this character in this Act, and only on one occasion is he made to appear on the scene. He leads the Ducal party in search of Othello and, discovering him at the Sagittary, informs him of the Duke's urgent summons to him to appear before the Sénate, and explains the cause of it. Beyond this, he plays no part here. But mention is made of him when he forms the subject of conversation between Iago and Roderigo, and again in Iago's soliloquy, when he thinks of using him as a tool to spoil Othello's happiness with. He is spoken of by Iago as merely 'a great arithmetician,' a 'debitor and creditor,' a 'counter-caster.' In the opinion of Iago, he has no soldiership, except the theoretical knowledge of it. But, as Cassio was preferred and elected instead of himself to the post of the Lieutenant to Othello, Iago has become his enemy whose opinion must be biased and should be largely discounted. Later-on, he describes him in his soliloquy, as one who

Hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected ; framed to make women falso.

This external bodily grace of Cassio, and his rather free, though innocent, conduct with women, are used as plausible reasons by Iago for connecting him with the supposed guilt of Desdemona and for inflaming Othello against her and him. Both Desdemona and Cassio are, however, totally unaware of the foul schemes hatched behind their backs.

RODERIGO:—He is one of 'the wealthy curled darlings' of Venice who has attempted to win Desdemona but failed. Like the rest, he, too, is shunned, and, as Brabantio puts it,—

I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors;
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee.

Roderigo, however, is so much infatuated in his love for her that he cannot control himself. He confesses his weakness on this score to Iago when he says,—

I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

He is therefore much perturbed and disappointed when he learns of Desdemona's flight from her house and her marriage with Othello. He grows despondent when, later, he probably comes to know that her marriage has received the Ducal approval and confirmation, and that she is going out to Cyprus to live with her husband there. This news affects him so much that he feels that life has become a burden to him. Hence he resolves to end his life by drowning; as he expresses himself to Iago on meeting him,—

I will incontinently drown myself.

... ..

It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.

Roderigo is envious of Othello for having succeeded in winning Desdemona's heart, and therefore jealously remarks to Iago about his marriage in these sneering terms,—

What a full fortune does the thick lips owe
If he can carry't thus?

On another occasion, too, he speaks slightly of Othello before Brabantio, and describes him as 'a lascivious Moor',—

An extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and everywhere.

In spite of his wealth, beauty of person, and noble birth, Roderigo is a brainless fop. He therefore finds himself unable to press his suit with effect to Desdemona before her marriage, or to act independently after her wedding. He needs and seeks for the help of Iago whom, however, he has to pay heavily for his services. He is so dull of brain, and so much buried in love, that he is incapable of seeing the cunning and wicked nature of his friend whom he takes to be really honorable, honest and serviceable. He is easily deluded into parting with his money very often and very heavily to Iago; as he himself puts it,—

Thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine.

Sometimes, however, he too realises that the expenditure of his money by Iago has been a waste, and therefore takes him to task on that score. In the opening Scene of the Drama, he attacks him for what he thinks to be his (Iago's) failure to inform him before-hand of Desdemona's marriage, reminding him of the money spent by him. But, being a great gull, he is again and again easily deluded into the belief of his friend's trustworthiness and honesty. He therefore repeatedly relies on him and pays

him more than ever. Thus when, out of extreme disappointment, he thinks of drowning himself and expresses his mind to Iago, he is soon brought round by Iago's apparently cogent arguments so completely that he once again asks him,

Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

and, for this end, he does not hesitate even 'to go sell all his land.'

Only on two occasions does Roderigo appear in this Act,—once at its commencement and again at its end. On the first occasion, he appears as a disappointed and therefore worried lover; and, on the second, as a deeply love-stricken fellow, extremely dejected and thinking of ending his life. On both occasions, he is easily satisfied and even encouraged by the clever Iago to go on in his search after, what the latter definitely knows to be, only a male's nest.

The only part that he plays in this Act is that of Iago's money-box or, as Iago puts it, 'Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.' He is to be the unwilling yet frequent pay-master to Iago.

BRABANTIO:—(See pp. 51—54, for his character-sketch and the part he plays in the First Act.) His importance from the standpoint of the Drama as a whole is directly nothing. Indirectly, however, he serves by contrast to enhance the circumstances that culminate in the Tragedy. He is a nobleman with peculiar notions of State service and of social conduct. In spite of this, his own daughter marries a stranger,—an event which is looked upon with horror by him. His belief is partly shared by others. But the words and views, he then expresses in anger, are later-on used by an enemy to damage his daughter's character with Othello.

EMILIA:—In this Act, she is just mentioned as merely the wife of Iago. 'I prithee, let thy wife attend on her,' says Othello. She is to attend on Desdemona on her voyage to Cyprus, after Othello's departure.

IAGO:—He is a young man 'four times seven years' of age. Within this short period, he says, 'I have looked upon the world' a great deal. He has been a soldier, and has given 'the proof' of his valour,—as he speaks of himself before Roderigo—'at Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds, Christian and heathen.' But he comes before us as an Ancient to the General, Othello. He is fully aware of his capacity for any post or work and, consequently, expects adequate recognition. 'I know my price', says he to Roderigo and, aspiring for the vacant Lieutenantcy, asserts,—'I am worth no worse a place.'

The part that he plays in this Act (and in the entire Drama) is very various and important. But for him, men and events would have gone on,—each, insignificant and isolated, to his natural end, entailing no cost or waste. It is he that gives each person or incident a spin, a stir, a motion, and brings the embedded, evil human passions into play. By carefully nourishing them and watchfully guiding their erratic course, he gives them strength, adds to their volume, and finally leads them to end in a terrific explosion.

The key to understand this masterful personality is supplied by his own statement, made to the despondent Roderigo bent on suicide,—

'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus.

Here, he emphasizes the necessity for and the supremacy of the human Will,—the capacity for Volition or the determinative faculty in Man, as distinguished from the capacity for Feeling and the power of Intellect by which we perceive, understand, judge and reason. He has a clear perception of the value of Intellect which enables man to reflect and distinguish between what is good and what is bad for himself. Volition is a part of the Mind and is a most valuable asset to man. As he puts it, but for that 'power and corrigible authority' (which lies in our Will), 'the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions.' These, according to him, are 'our raging motions,' 'our carnal stings,' 'our unbitted lusts' which together form, in his language, the 'Sensuality.' And this comes to men from nowhere without but, to repeat his words, lies in and springs from the very 'blood and baseness of our natures.' And, while a well-reasoned or well-disciplined Will forms 'the corrigible authority' or 'the power' in men, Sensuality constitutes men's 'baseness.' The one elevates, and the other lowers, men. The contrast is thus clear between the human and the animal natures—the one, working by his Reason, becomes a better man; and another, following his Sensuality, becomes a mere animal. Iago, in whom Reason or Intellect reigns supreme, would never become animalic; and this fortitude or strength of his mind, he jocularly but cleverly hits off, by saying—

Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a guineahen, I will change my humanity with a baboon.

Since Reason elevates Man from the Animal state, the greater the Reason, the greater is the distinction and the distance between him and the other. Hence, the greatest Reasoning Capacity makes the greatest man. To the extent to which that Reasoning Capacity is out-weighed or modified by Sensuality, to that extent the Reasoning Power is lowered, and the man falls to the animal level.

If Sensuality deters man from becoming a higher, greater or better being, anything, (Iago now descends to sophistry),

that checks, moderates, modifies or alters that Will is Sensuality. Charity and Duty, Pity and Sorrow, Love and Virtue have no place in his Philosophy, because these exercise a restraining influence on Pure Will, and prevent its operations from following their natural course. Hence, these, according to Iago, come under the category of Sensuality which marks the animal in man. In his logic, Sentiment is but a variation of Sensuality, and Emotions are only exaggerations of 'our raging motions.' To him 'Virtue' is a 'fig', and 'Love'—merely 'a lust of the blood.'

Since he would not permit Pity, and the like, towards others, in the domain of Pure Reason, man, according to the conclusions of his logic, is and must be highly self-centred, absolutely individualistic, and therefore supremely selfish and self-loving. One who is not so, is a weak man, helpless and incapable of success in life. One must know, first and foremost, how to love oneself, purely, solely, and without any thought of another's weal or woe. Such persons are the rare products of this world, so says Iago to Roderigo,—

Since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself.

Since, in the armoury of his pure Reason, there ought to be no room for Sentiment, man must be, not only selfish, but even merciless. Mercy is a weak or womanly virtue which should not be sanctioned or encouraged. It detracts from the strength of one's Will. According to him, one's Intellect must be keen, cold, cutting, and swayed by no weaker emotions of any kind.

Such, in a nutshell, is Iago himself—a young man, supremely intellectual and strong-willed. He is almost Napoleonic in these two traits of his character. Holding such views of Life, he is wholly and solely selfish, self-loving, living and labouring only for himself, without a touch of Pity or Sorrow, Duty or Charity to others. And, since he desires to live all for himself, he naturally suspects others to interfere with his individual well-being, and, therefore, he begins to hate them. Thus, selfishness, with him, becomes suspicion of others, while his Duty to himself easily translates itself into callousness or even cruelty to the rest.

He is wicked by nature and is, hence, ever doubting, suspecting, and conspiring against others—all for the sole purpose of satisfying his malignant self.

His keen Intellect enables him, not only to know his object definitely, not only to devise and execute his plans successfully, but also to know and judge each man and each event at his or its right value. He is a keen observer of men and matters, one who has 'looked upon the world,' a great deal, one who can easily discern the merits as well as the defects of each, and the purpose to which he or it can be utilised to his own best advantage. (1) To him, Roderigo

is 'my fool' and, therefore, unfit for anything except the only purpose of supplying him with money, of becoming his 'purse,' since he is rich. (2) Cassio, for him, is 'the proper man;' and, because he is endowed with 'a smooth dispose to be suspected,' he can concoct the story 'that he is too familiar with his (Othello's) wife,' and thus use him as a tool for ruining Othello and Desdemona (3) Othello, in his view, 'is of a free and open nature, that thinks men honest that but seem to be so,' and therefore 'will as tenderly be led by the nose as asses are,' and, thus, his ear can be easily abused with the tale of his wife's unchastity.

Since he can appreciate and measure each man and each situation correctly and properly, he knows how to behave suitably unto each. (a) Before Roderigo, he says, 'I hate the Moor;' but before Othello, he speaks against the gull and informs him that

He prated
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your Honour
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him.

(b) To Roderigo, he says, 'Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him' (Othello); while before Othello, he speaks, 'nine or ten times I had thought to have yerked him (Roderigo) here under the ribs.' (c) To Roderigo, he makes a profession of his friendship, —

I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy
deserving with cables of perdurable toughness.

To Othello, he seems a loyal servant and well-wisher, and advises him in all earnestness that, since Brabantio is powerful enough to do him harm, he should be sure of his marriage; and, when the different parties arrive, searching for Othello, he suggests that he 'were best go in.' (d) Again, he sets up Roderigo to lead Brabantio to the Sagittary against Othello, while he himself joins the latter early enough to inform him of the hostile party coming against him,—'these are the raised father and his friends'; and that 'he (Brabantio) comes to bad intent.' (e) Before Brabantio, he speaks of Othello in the most disrespectful and vulgar terms. as 'a black ram' and 'a barbary horse;' while, in the presence of the latter, he addresses him most respectfully, as 'Your Honour,' and 'Sir.'

Iago thus practises double knavery, plays the part of a double-headed Janus,—now turning a sweet and smiling face to each party but, behind his back, becoming his bitterest foe. His artful behaviour differs according to different persons and occasions. He is a past-master in the art of hypocrisy, pretence and artifice, appearing to be true to every one, but in reality true to none. This is what he means when he says to Roderigo, 'I am not

what I am', that is, what I seem; meaning thereby that his inner nature is quite different from the seeming garb or attitude put on by him for each time and occasion. And, if ever he were to let others know what he actually is, as against what he appears to be, he says he will be acting foolishly; to use his figurative language,—

For, when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at;

Iago's seeming friendship to each individual is for no one's good except for that of himself. He makes Roderigo understand that, in spite of his hatred of Othello, if still he serves him, he does so for his own selfish purpose; says he,—

In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty
But seeming so, for my peculiar end.

And about Roderigo, similarly, in his soliloquy, he gives expression to the same selfish sentiment;

Thus do I make my fool my purse;
For, I mine own gained knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with a such a snipe
But for my sport and profit.

Iago is so utterly vile, wicked and depraved that he has no prickings of Conscience. (a) He induces Roderigo to cuckold Othello and asks him to join him in ruining that person. (b) He also thinks of abusing Othello's ear with the story of Cassio's misconduct with Desdemona. (c) He plans to pull down Cassio from his place. (d) He takes the mere rumour of Othello's misconduct with Emilia for a certainty and, on that score, seeks for revenge against him, wife for wife. He thus resolves on harming several persons in various ways. He even gloats over his capacity for mischief, and says,—

I hav't. It is engender'd . Hell and Night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

And yet, this very villain speaks to Othello on a prior occasion as one having 'Godliness,' possessing 'stuff of Conscience,' and lacking 'iniquity' to do 'contrived murder,' thus assuming the garb of piety and saintliness.

Such is Iago, the devil incarnate in human shape, saturated with utter selfishness, a thoroughly malignant nature, but possessing a keen and cunning Intellect which enables him to achieve his ends at the cost of others. The Tragedy that ensues hereafter is chiefly his work.

(OUTLINE OF THE STORY, ACT BY ACT.)

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF

ACT II.

A severe storm breaks out and destroys the enemy fleet. Othello and Cassio (his Lieutenant) set out, at the same time, in different ships for Cyprus. But, owing to the stormy weather, they get separated and reach the destination one after another. Desdemona who subsequently leaves Venice in company with Iago and his wife Emilia, arrives at the place before Othello, and is naturally very anxious about his safety. To beguile the tedium of waiting, she engages herself in some light talk with her attendants, Emilia, Cassio, and Iago who has his fling at women in general. The conversation is cut short by the blowing of the trumpet, announcing the arrival of the Moor. And when he comes ashore, the meeting between him and Desdemona is most happy.

A public holiday is declared under the orders of Othello, to enable the people to observe a festival and show their joy at the destruction of the enemy's fleet, and also at the nuptials of the General. In the festive meeting of friends in the Fort, Iago, for his own wicked purposes, causes Cassio to get drunk, so that he may be easily involved in a drunken brawl with Roderigo whom he has already instigated to that effect. So, when drunken Cassio leaves his carousing friends, he is soon engaged in a quarrel with Roderigo. Montano interposes but is hurt in the affray by Cassio. Iago causes the alarm bell to be rung and the whole town to fall into a fright, and thus, by his clever manoueuering, exaggerates a drunken brawl into a serious mutiny.

Hearing the alarm bell, Othello at once arrives on the scene to quell the disturbance and to inquire into the cause of it. As the Governor of the island in a state of war, he is naturally very angry. He learns the cause of the affray from Iago who appears to make it light for Cassio, but in reality makes it very serious for him. Othello dismisses Cassio at once from his post of Lieutenantcy.

Cassio then recovers from the effects of drink which he calls the 'devil', and feels thoroughly dejected and ashamed of himself. But Iago palliates his folly and suggests a way to get back to Othello's favour by beseeching his wife to intercede for him. Cassio takes his friend's suggestion as very wise and acceptable.

Roderigo now turns up and complains to Iago that he has squandered so much money but without any success so far. Iago asks him to be more patient and gives him good and satisfying reasons for it.

A Scene in a Sea-port Town: arrival of Cassio in one boat, and of Desdemona, Iago and Emilia in another.



Sensations draw more crowds than sober Appeals.

(Pic. 13)

SCENE I.—A SEA-PORT TOWN IN CYPRUS. AN OPEN PLACE NEAR THE QUAY.

Montano and Gentlemen talk about the Tempest and the Fate of the Turkish Fleet.

MON:—What, from the cape, can you discern at sea?

1st GENT:—Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood,¹ I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,² descry a sail.³

MON:—Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at land,⁴ a fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements;⁵ if it hath ruffian'd⁶ so upon the sea, what ribs of oak,⁷ when mountains melt on them,⁸ can hold the mortise?⁹ What shall we hear of this?

2nd GENT:—A segregation¹⁰ of the Turkish fleet; for, do but stand upon the foaming shore,¹¹ the chidden billow¹² seems to pelt the clouds;¹³ the wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous mane,¹⁴ seems to cast water on the burning Bear¹⁵, and quench¹⁶ the guards of the ever-fixed pole:¹⁷ I never did like molestation¹⁸ view on the enchafed flood¹⁹

MON:—If that the Turkish fleet be not enshelter'd and embay'd,²⁰ they are drown'd. it is impossible they bear it out.²¹

[Enter a 3rd Gent.

News of the wreck of the Turkish Fleet and of Cassio's arrival.

3rd GENT:—News, lads! our wars are done. The desperate tempest hath so bang'd²² the Turks that their designment halts;²³ a noble ship of Venice hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance²⁴ on most part of their fleet....The ship is here put in,²⁵ a Veronesa;²⁶ Michael Cassio, Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello, is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea, and is in full commission²⁷ here for Cyprus.

MON:—I am glad on't,²⁸ 'tis a worthy Governor.

1. High-wrought flood: highly wrought or agitated sea. 2. 'Twixt the heaven and the main: between the sky and the sea, that is, where they appear to meet, on the horizon. 3. Descry a sail: see a sailing ship. 4. At land: on land. 5. A fuller: a worse storm has never blown against our fortress; meaning that it was the heaviest ever experienced. 6. Ruffian'd: played the ruffian: (i.e.) if the wind has blown with such terrific violence. 7. Ribs of oak: ship made of the planks of oak-timber. 8. When: them: when mountain-high waves burst and fall on them (pouring a large quantity of water). 9. Mortise: joints where one set of planks fit into another. 10. Segregation: separation or dispersal. 11. Do but... shore: If you only stand on the shore where the waves break themselves into foam. 12. The chidden billow: the angry or powerful wave, the 'high-wrought wave.' 13. Seems... clouds: seems to rise so high as to strike the clouds. 14. High and monstrous mane: thickly-grown and terrible-looking hair of the animal, such as the lion's, when in anger. 15. Burning Bear: shining stars of the constellation called 'The Bear'. 16. Quench: cover or hide. 17. The guards... pole: the two shining stars (out of the seven) revolving round and pointing to the North Pole Star which seems to be fixed. 18. Like molestation: similar trouble. 19. Enchafed flood: angry sea. 20. Embay'd: resting in a harbour. 21. Bear it out: stand it. 22. Bang'd: struck. 23. Designment halts: plans have failed. 24. Sufferance: suffering. 25. Put in: come in. 26. Veronesa: belonging to Verona, a town of Venice. 27. Commission: authority or charge. 28. On't: Of it.

3rd GENT:—But this same Cassio, though he speak of comfort touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly¹ and prays the Moor be safe; for, they were parted with² foul³ and violent tempest.

MON:—Pray Heaven he be (safe) for, I have serv'd him, and the man commands like a full⁴ soldier. Let's to the sea-side, ho!; as well to see the vessel that's come in as to throw out our eyes for brave Othello, even till we make the main and the aerial blue an indistinct regard.⁵

3rd GENT:—Come, let's do so; for, every minute is expectancy⁶ of more arrivance.⁷ [Enter Cassio.]

CAS:—Thanks, (to) you,—the valiant of this warlike isle, that so approve⁸ the Moor. O! let the heavens give him defence against the elements;⁹ for, I have lost him on a dangerous sea.

MON:—Is he well shipp'd¹⁰

CAS:—His bark is stoutly timber'd,¹¹ and his pilot of very expert and approv'd allowance,¹² therefore, my hopes, not surfeited to death,¹³ stand in bold cure.¹⁴ (Within, a cry of 'A sail! —a sail! —a sail!' and guns are heard.).....

2nd GENT:—They do discharge their shot of courtesy;¹⁵ our friends at least. [Exit.]

MON:—But good Lieutenant, is your General wiv'd¹⁶

CAS:—Most fortunately he hath achiev'd¹⁷ a maid that paragons¹⁸ description and wild fame;¹⁹ one that excels the quirks²⁰ of blazoning²¹ pens,²² and in th' essential²³ vesture of creation²⁴ does tire the ingener.²⁵ [Re-enter 2nd Gentleman.]

1. Sadly · seriously. 2. With by. 3. Foul treacherous, unreliable.
4 Full: perfect, accomplished. 5. Indistinct regard a hazy aspect, of the same hazy appearance. 6 Expectancy · expectation, hope 7. Arrivance : arrival.
8. Approve praise, hold in high regard 9. Elements wind and water.
10. Well shipp'd : sailing in a good, trustworthy ship 11. Stoutly timber'd : made of strong timber. 12. Pilot of, .. allowance : allowed or acknowledged to be a great expert and much tried or experienced. 13 Not surfeited to death not being excessive or abundant; (surfeited, eaten or gorged greedily, to death immoderately or excessively so as to bring about death, as when we say 'frozen to death' or 'broiled or sweated to death.') 14. Stand in bold cure stand every chance of being fulfilled. The meaning is, my hopes, though very meagre, are yet healthy; tho' not too sanguine, they have every chance of realization.
15. Shot of courtesy: shot fired by way of welcome or friendship. 16. Wiv'd. married. 17 Achiev'd: secured or gained. 18 Paragons: equals or matches; will bear any amount of. 19. Description and wild fame · glowing account and extravagant praise. 20 Quirks: thoughts, conceits or ideas, dashed off in haste. 21. Blazoning: displaying in a glaring, ostentatious manner; or proclaiming loudly. 22 'One.... ..pens one that baffles any amount of glowing description in writing. 23. Essential inherent, belonging to the essence. 24. Vesture of creation' garb or dress, given her by Nature. 25. Ingener: engineer, one who designs or describes, (i.e.) an artist. And in.....the ingener in her natural make-up or character, i.e.—in the qualities which Nature has given her, she will tire out even an artist to praise or describe her,

Arrival of the Boat with Desdemona, Iago, Emilia, Etc.

CAS:—How now! who has put in?¹

2nd GENT:—'Tis one Iago, Ancient to the General.

CAS:—He has had most favourable and happy speed: tempests themselves, high seas, and howling² winds, the gutter'd³ rocks and congregated⁴ sands,—traitors, ensteep'd⁵ to clog⁶ the guiltless keel,⁷—as⁸ having sense of beauty, do omit⁹ their mortal natures,¹⁰ letting go safely by the divine¹¹ Desdemona.

MON:—What is she?

CAS:—She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,¹² left in the conduct¹³ of the bold Iago, whose footing here anticipates our thoughts a se'nnight's speed.¹⁴ Great Jove,¹⁵ Othello guard, and swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,¹⁶ that he may bless¹⁷ this bay with his tall¹⁸ ship, make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,¹⁹ give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,²⁰ and bring all Cyprus comfort!

Desdemona lands ashore and Cassio Welcomes her.

CAS:—O! behold, the riches of the ship is come on shore! Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of Heaven, before, behind thee, and on every hand, enwheel²¹ thee round!

DES:—I thank you, valiant Cassio. What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

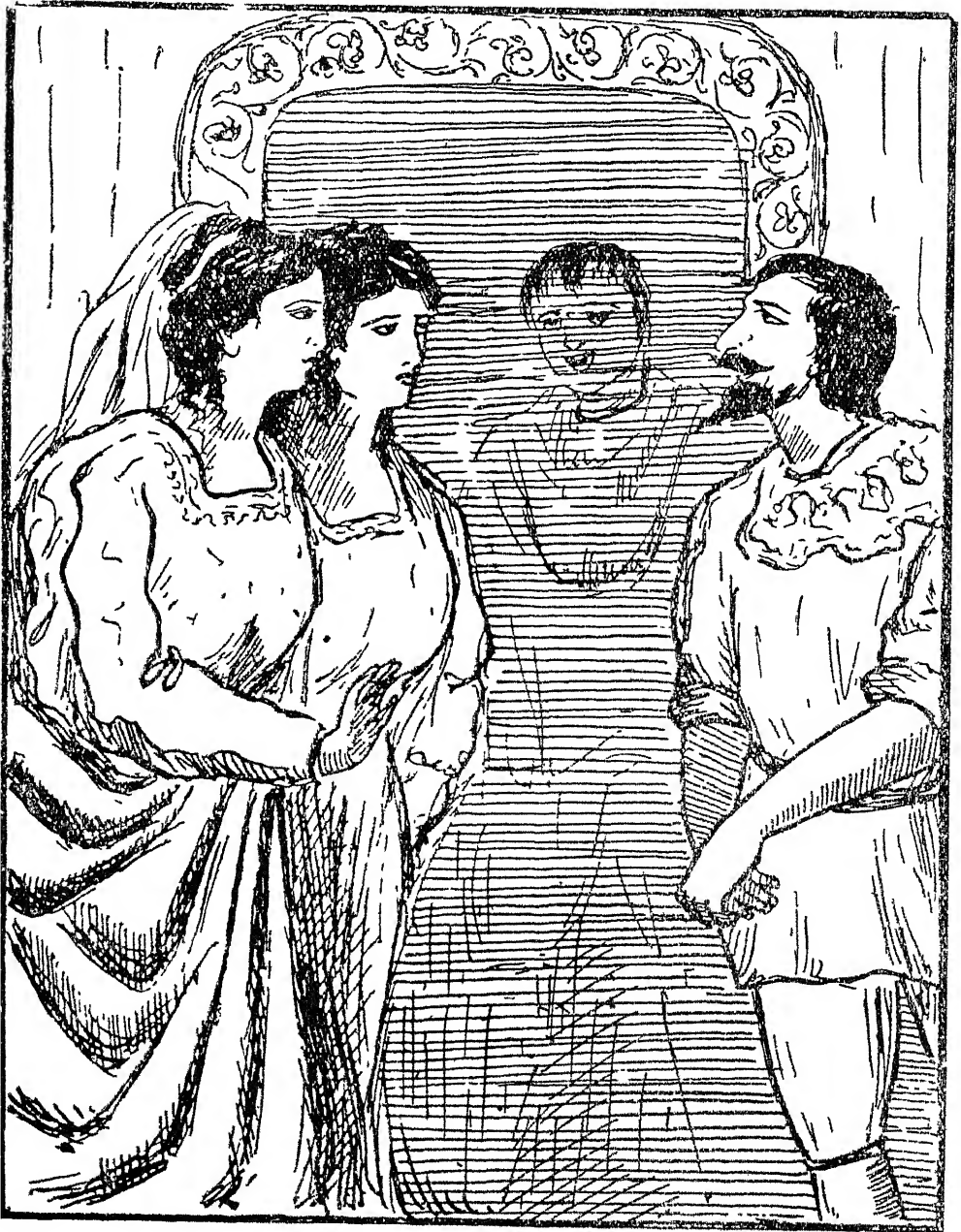
CAS:—He is not yet arriv'd: nor know I aught but that he's well, and will be shortly here.

DES:—O! but I fear,—How lost you company?

CAS:—The great contention²² of the sea and skies parted our fellowship.²³—But, hark! a sail. [A cry—A Sail, A Sail.

1. Put in come in, or put into harbour. 2. Howling. blowing with high speed and making a noise. 3. Gutter'd: channelled. 4. Congregated: heaped up or deposited. 5. Traitors, ensteep'd treacherous things (rocks and sand-banks referred to in the foregoing line) which are submerged or hid under water. 6. Clog: catch, hold fast or hinder. 7. The guiltless keel: the innocent, unsuspecting ship (keel,—the principal long timber at the bottom of a ship). 8. As: as if. 9. Omit: forego. 10. Mortal natures: deadly or killing qualities. 11: Divine: heavenly, superhuman, admirable. 12. Captain's captain ruler of the Captain. (referring to the great control that she exercises over Othello.) 13. Conduct: escort or conveyance. 14. Whose footingspeed whose arrival here has taken place by a week in advance of, or earlier than, the time expected or fixed. (It was feared that owing to the storm, they would be delayed on the way. This was what Cassio meant when a little while ago he said to Montano, 'tempests themselves ...do omit their mortal natures ...divine Desdemona). 15. Jove the mythological God of the ancient Romans. 16. Othello.. breath: save Othello by giving his ship your favourable wind. 17. Bless: grace. 18. Tall: fine, gallant. 19. Love's quick pants.....arms: loving embraces, with quick, short and excited pantings or breaths. 20. Give.....spirits: revive our drooping spirits or dejected hopes. 21. Enwheel: surround, encompass. 22. Contention: commotion. 23. Fellowship: company.

Iago slanders women in general, and Desdemona rebukes him.



Each sex, class, or party takes only a half view of any public matter.

(Pic. 14.)

Cassio's Courtesy to Women Excites Iago's Slander: Desdemona Rebukes Iago for Slandering Woman-kind.

CAS:—(To Iago) Good Ancient, you are welcome! (To Emilia).
Welcome, mistress. Let it not gall your patience,¹ good Iago,
that I extend my manners;² 'tis my breeding that gives this
bold show of courtesy.³ (Kissing her).

IAGO:—Sir, would she give you so much of her lips as of her tongue
she oft bestows on me, you'd have enough.⁴

DES—Alas! she has no speech. [Seeing Emilia silent.

IAGO:—In faith, too much; I find it still when I have list⁵ to sleep.
Marry¹⁶ before your ladyship, I grant, she puts her tongue a
little in her heart and chides with thinking.⁷

EMI:—You have little cause to say so.

IAGO:—Come on,⁸ come on, you are pictures out of doors,⁹ bells in
your parlours,¹⁰ wild-cats¹¹ in your kitchens, saints in your
injuries,¹² devils being¹³ offended, players in your housewifery,¹⁴
and housewives¹⁵ in your beds.

DES.—O! fie¹⁶ upon thee; slanderer.!

IAGO:—Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk¹⁷ you rise to play, and
go to bed to work.

EMI:—You shall not write my praise.

IAGO:—No, let me not.

DES:—What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

IAGO:—O gentle lady, do not put me to 't;¹⁸ for, I am nothing if not
critical.¹⁹

DES:—Come on, assay.—There's one²⁰ gone to the harbour?

1. Gall your patience make you sour-tempered or irritated. 2. I extend my manners I not only salute but go so far as to kiss. 3. 'Tis my courtesy; 'tis my particular training or up-bringing that induces me to show my respect in this bold manner. 4. Sir enough. sir, if she would be as excessively loving to you as she is frequently talkative to me, then she would be as troublesome to you as to me. 5. List, a desire or inclination. 6. Marry. (originally, Virgin Mary), an interjection meaning, 'indeed'. 'forsooth'. 7. Chides with thinking chides, scolds or grumbles only in thought, not aloud. 8. Come on, come! used as an interjection, implying rebuke or exhortation. 9. Pictures out of doors You look like pictures (with your painted or powdered faces) when you go out. 10. Bells in your parlours very talkative at home, with your shrill voices sounding like bells. 11. Wild-cats quarrelsome (or thievish) like untamed cats. 12. Saints in your injuries sanctimonious or making a show of sanctity or excuse when you commit injuries. 13. Being: when. 14. Players . . . housewifery very playful or negligent in your household affairs. 15. Housewives, here used in the wrong sense of 'lustful'. 16. Fie! an exclamation denoting contempt or disgust. 17. I am a Turk: I may be called a Turk; a term of reproach, meaning, 'a lying barbarian. (possibly insinuating Desdemona's marriage with Othello, the Moor) The word 'Turk' also means 'an infidel'. 18. Put me to it: challenge or force me to do so. 19. Critical: censorious; the meaning of the line is, 'I cannot do without criticising; that is my habit'. 20. There's one: i.e., Is there one or has anyone...

IAGO:—Ay, madam.

DES:—I am not merry; but I do beguile the thing I am¹ by seeming otherwise. Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

IAGO:—I am about it; but² indeed, my invention³ comes from my pate⁴ as birdlime does from frize;⁵ it plucks out⁶ brains and all; but my Muse labours,⁷ and thus she is deliver'd.⁸ "If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit, the one's for use,⁹ the other useth¹⁰ it."

DES:—Well prais'd! How, if she be black and witty?

IAGO:— If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

DES:—Worse and worse.

EMI:—How, if fair and foolish?

IAGO:— She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For, even her folly help'd to an heir.¹¹

DES:—These are old fond¹² paradoxes¹³ to make fools laugh i' the alehouse.¹⁴ What miserable praise hast thou for her that's foul¹⁵ and foolish?

IAGO:— There's none so foul and foolish thereunto,
But does¹⁶ foul pranks¹⁷ which fair and wise ones do.¹⁸

DES:—O heavy¹⁹ ignoranc! thou praisest the worst best. But, what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed,—one that, in the authority²⁰ of her merit, did justly put on the vouch²¹ of²² very malice²³ itself?

1. Beguile the thing I am. beguile myself or my moody nature, i.e. while away my time, relieve the tedium or weariness of my time. 2. But and. 3. Invention fancy, thought, idea. 4. Pate. head 5. Birdlime.....frize lime or adhesive juice (used in ensnaring small birds) that comes rushingly or fast from a certain plant or tree called 'Frize'. Iago means here that his thoughts come quickly or suddenly from his mind. 6. Plucks out seriously disturbs. 7. My Muse labours my capacity for poetic composition struggles. Muse was considered the Goddess of Poetry. What Iago means here is that, though he was quick in forming ideas, yet he lacked the ability to express them in proper poetic form. 8. Thus she is delivered in the following manner she (Muse) expresses herself; (i.e.) thus run my poetic thoughts. 9. For use. for being used. 10. Useth; uses or guides. The meaning of the two lines is, 'If a woman is both beautiful and wise, she must make use of her beauty by marrying, but she must be wise enough to choose a proper husband!' (Another indirect hint to Desdemona about her supposed wrong choice of her husband). 11. She never . heir: A fair woman is not generally considered foolish, even if she be so, still she would be attractive and sought after for her fair face: that is, her folly or carnal desire will help her to beget a child (which means that she will not be lacking in the means or the men to satisfy her passions.) 12. Fond foolish 13. Paradoxes: sayings or sentiments which appear contradictory, absurd, opposed to common sense, but are yet true, clever, double-edged sayings. 14. To make... ale-house: to excite the laughter of fools in a tavern or drinking saloon. What Desdemona means is that such witty remarks are fit only for fools and drunkards. 15. Foul: filthy, profane, obscene. 16. But does: who does not do. 17. Pranks: mischievous sport. 18. There's.... do: obscenity and folly (or carnal passions) are not the qualities of only a few women but, of all, including the fair and the wise also. 19. Heavy: dense, gross. 20. Authority: conviction, consciousness. 21. Put on the vouch: challenge the proof or attestation. 22. Of. from. 23. Malice. malicious people. The whole sentence means, 'her virtues are such that she will command respect even from her opponents maliciously inclined.'

IAGO:—She that was ever fair and never proud, had tongue at will and yet was never loud; never lack'd gold and yet went never gay; fled from her wish and yet said 'Now I may'; she that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh, bade her wrong stay and her displeasure¹ fly; she that, in wisdom, never was so frail to change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,² she that could think and ne'er disclose her mind, see suitors following and not look behind; she was a wight,³ if ever such wight were,—

DES:—To do what?

IAGO:—To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.⁴

DES —O most lame and impotent conclusion!⁵ Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. How say you, Cassio? Is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?⁶

CAS:—He speaks home,⁷ madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.⁸ (Kissing his own fingers)

IAGO:—(Aside.) He takes her by the palm. ay, well said,⁹ whisper: with as little a web¹⁰ as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve¹¹ thee in thine own courtship.¹² You say true, 'tis so, indeed. If such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry,¹³ it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers¹⁴ so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the 'sir' in.¹⁵ Very good, well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. Yet, again, your fingers to your lips? Would they were blisters for your sake!¹⁶

(A trumpet heard) The Moor! I know his trumpet.

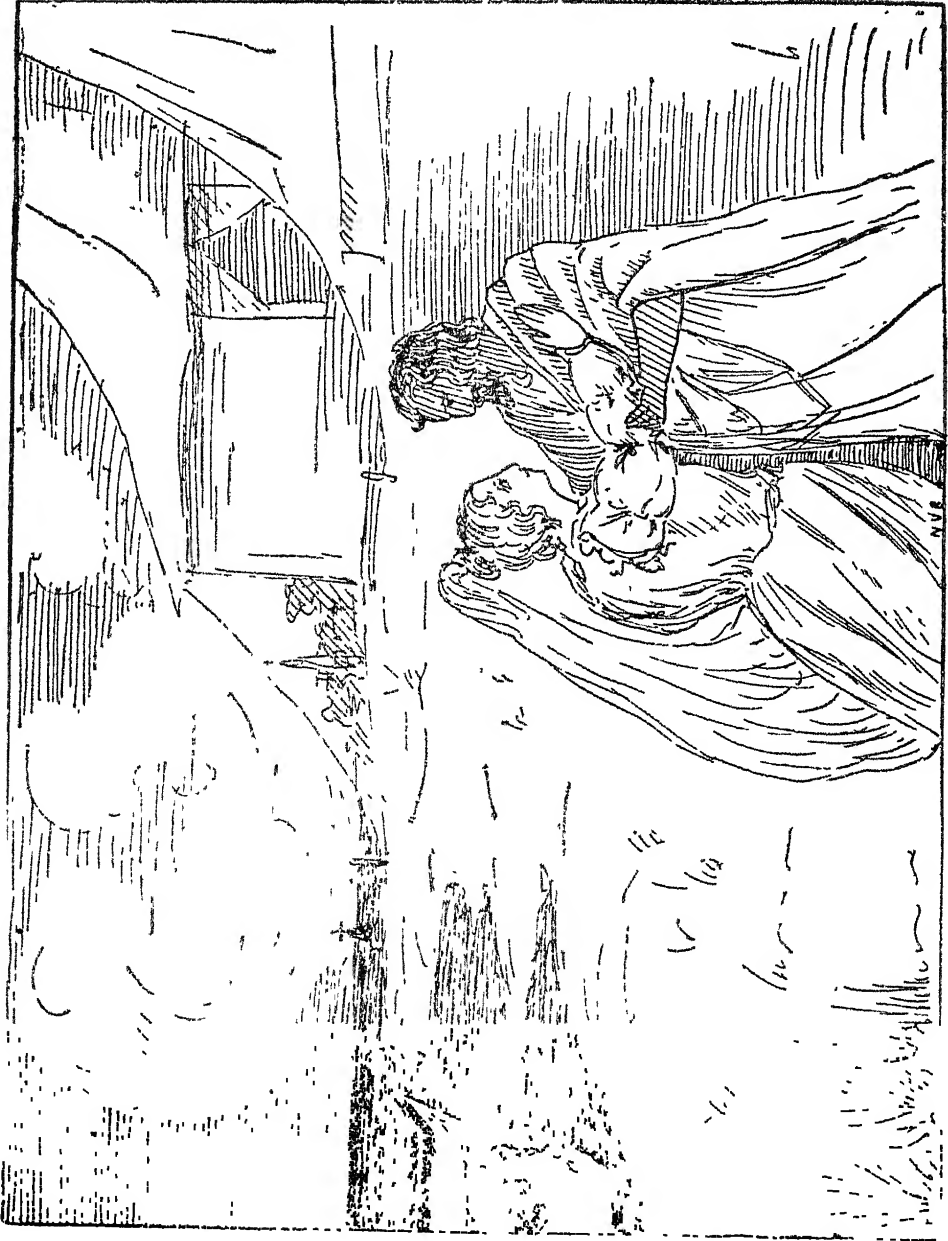
CAS:—'Tis truly so.

DES:—Let's meet him and receive him

CAS:—Lo! where!¹⁷ he comes!

1. Displeasure: anger. 2. So frail. Salmon's tail so weak-minded as to prefer a fool (cod's head) or an empty-headed countess to a man of true worth (implied by the phrase 'Salmon's tail' which is supposed to be the best part of the best of fishes). Here, Iago, in describing a deserving woman, refers to Desdemona herself and congratulates her on choosing a better man (Othello) than an empty-headed top (Rodrigo). 3. Wight: person (male or female). 4. To sucklebeer to breed and suckle children and indulge in gossip over a glass of beer,—(from the practice of waiters visiting an ale-house and there hearing and registering or chronicling every small and big event) 5. Lame and impotent conclusion defective and weak inference. 6. Profane . .counsellor. coarse (in speech) and extravagant in advice. 7. Speaks home talks freely, unreservedly. 8. You may.....the scholar you may like him better as a soldier (or a rough fellow) than as a scholar (or a cultured and refined person.) He is more rough than refined 9. Well said: well done. 10. As little a web a small net (slender material, simple or innocent affair). 11. Gyve fetter 12. Courtship. courtesy, courteous behaviour (characteristic of a courtier). 13. Lieutenantry. Office of a Lieutenant. 14. Kissed your three fingers: To kiss was the mode of saluting a lady 15. To play the 'sir' in: to play the fine gentleman in. 16. Would they.. .your sake: I wish that in, your own interest, they were blisters or painful sores, (so that you would not have kissed them and thereby given me a handle or cause to connect my story of your illicit love to your ruin). 17. Where. there.

Othello, on landing, is overjoyed at meeting Desdemona.



There are moments of supreme felicity in the lives of all of us.

(Pic. 15.)

OTHELLO,—OVERJOYED ON MEETING DESDEMONA.

OTH.—O my fair warrior¹ It gives me wonder² great as my content³ to see you here before me. O my soul's joy! if after every tempest, come such calms, may the winds blow till they have waken'd death,⁴ and let the labouring bark⁵ climb hills of seas⁶ Olympus-high,⁷ and duck⁸ again as low as Hell's from Heaven! If it were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy,⁹ for, I fear¹⁰ my soul hath her content so absolute¹¹ that not another comfort¹² like to this succeeds in unknown fate.¹³

DES.—The Heavens forbid but that¹⁴ our loves and comforts should increase, even as our days do grow¹⁵

OTH.—Amen to that,¹⁶ sweet powers!¹⁷ I cannot speak enough of this content; it stops me here;¹⁸ it is too much of joy. and this, the greatest discords be [Kisses] that e'er our hearts shall make!¹⁹

IAGO —(Aside) O! you are well tun'd²⁰ now, but I'll set down the pegs that make this music,²¹ as honest as I am.²²

OTH.—Come, let us to the castle. News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are drown'd, how does my old acquaintance of this isle? (To Des) Honey, you shall be well desir'd²³ in Cyprus, I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet, I prattle out of fashion,²⁴ and I dote in mine own comforts²⁵ I prithee, good Iago, go to the bay, and disembark my coffers.²⁶ Bring thou the master²⁷ to the citadel,²⁸ he is a good one, and his worthiness does challenge much respect. Come, Desdemona, once more, well met at Cyprus! (Exit all, except Iago and Roderigo.)

1 Fair warrior: woman of heroic character; one who loves heroic deeds.
2. Wonder: happy surprise. 3. Content: contentment or satisfaction, the prose order is, 'It gives me as great a wonder as my content;' it means 'I am as much happily surprised as I am fully satisfied'. 4 Maydeath: let tempests be so violent as to cause death and destruction, i.e. after every .. 5. Labouring bark: ship struggling against wind and water 6 Hills of seas: high waves 7. Olympus-high: as high as the Olympus. (Olympus: a mountain in Greece, considered sacred, and hence very popular among the ancient Greeks). 8. Duck: go down. 9. If it.....happy: If I were to die now, I would die happily, (the reason being indicated in the following lines). 10 I fear: I am afraid, or I am doubtful (whether.....) 11 Absolute: full or complete 12. Comfort: happiness. 13. Fate: future The general meaning of the three lines is, 'I am afraid, or I doubt, if I shall have such complete happiness hereafter' 14. The heavens forbid but that: Let God forbid (or prevent) the happening of anything except that 15. As our days do grow as we grow older 16. Amen to that: 'Amen' is a word used by Christians as an expression of assent generally after prayers, meaning, 'let it be so'. 17- Sweet powers: kind deities or gods. 18. Ithere: the excess of my joy stops me here; or, prevents me from speaking any further. 19. And this.....make: if there are to be any frictions or misunderstandings between us in future, they must be treated (lightly,) as sweetly as these kisses. 20. Well-tuned: well-set for music. (i.e.) well or harmoniously agreed. 21. I'll setmusic: I will add (my own) handles to this music (i.e. devise means to spoil this harmony). 22. As honest as I am: as honest as I seem or am taken to be by others. 23. Desir'd: loved or liked. 24. I.fashion: I talk at random, (i.e.) without method or order. 25. I dote.....comforts: I am excessively fond of or pleased with my present happiness. 26. Coffers: valuable goods. 27. Master: Captain of the ship. 28. Citadel: Fort.

Iago silences the doubts and fears of Roderigo, and instructs him to engage Cassio in a scuffle.



The Devil knows how to tempt others with the bait of their self-interest

(Pic. 15)

IAGO COMMANDINGLY SILENCES THE DOUBTS AND FEARS OF RODERIGO.

IAGO:—Do thou meet me presently at the harbour. Come hither. If thou be'st valiant,¹—as, they say, base men being in love have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them,²—list me.³ The lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard.⁴ First, I must tell thee this, Desdemona is directly in love with him.

ROD:—With him! why, 'tis not possible

IAGO:—Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed.⁵ Mark me, with what violence she first loved the Moor but for⁶ bragging and telling her fantastical lies; and will she love him still for prating?⁷ Let not thy discreet heart think it.⁸ Her eye must be fed;⁹ and what delight shall she have to look on the devil?¹⁰ When the blood is made dull with the act of sport,¹¹ there should be, again to inflame¹² it and to give satiety a fresh appetite,¹³ loveliness in favour,¹⁴ sympathy in years, manners, and beauties,¹⁵ all which the Moor is defective in. Now, for want of these required conveniences,¹⁶ her delicate tenderness will find itself abused¹⁷, begin to heave the gorge,¹⁸ disrelish and abhor the Moor, very Nature will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second choice.

Now, sir, this granted,¹⁹ as it is a most pregnant and unforced position,²⁰ who stands so eminently²¹ in the degree of this fortune²² as Cassio does? a knave very voluble;²³ no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming,²⁴ for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden-loose affection;²⁵ why, none, why, none—a slipper and subtle knave,²⁶ a finder-out of occasions,

1. Valiant bold. 2. As . . . them as love-sick persons, under the impulse of their love, are believed to display courage which they do not generally possess. 3. List me listen to me 4. On guard on the court-yard where sentries are mustered. 5. Lay .. instructed lay your fingers thus (i.e. on thy mouth) and be quiet; and listen and learn from me 6 But for only for or, only because of. 7. Prating after this word, 'fantastical lies' are understood. 8 Discreet heart think it. knowing or discerning mind think so. 9 Fed· feasted or satisfied (with pleasanter objects) 10. Devil generally painted black; it refers here to Othello's dark color 11. When . . . sport when the emotion, being satisfied with sport or exercise, cools down. 12. Inflame rouse 13. To give . appetite . to give the cooled-down or satisfied emotion a new zest or relish, (i.e.) to rouse the craving again. 14. Loveliness in favour attractiveness in face. 15 Sympathy ... beauties: agreement in age, in manners and in graces or excellences of the body and mind. 16. Required conveniences: requisites or necessary things 17. Herabused her fine nature will feel itself wrongly treated 18 Begin .. gorge commence to turn or upset her stomach as if to vomit, (i.e.) she will feel sick and tired of him. 19 This granted: this being admitted. 20. Pregnant.....position: (pregnant; full of reason; unforced position . simple or natural ground), a plain and natural thing. 21. Eminently: prominently. 22. In.....fortune: in the highest step of this good luck. 23. Voluble: talkative and fickle. 24. No seeming: (who has) no greater or truer conscience than to appear to be polite and sympathetic. 25. For the.....affection; for the easier attainment of his secretly-licentious carnal passions. 26. A slipper.....knave: a shaky or unreliable and cunning rascal.

that has an eye can stamp¹ and counterfeit² advantages,³ though true advantage never present itself Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all these requisites in him that folly and green minds look after ;⁴ a pestilent complete knave , and the woman hath found him already.

ROD.—I can't believe that in her, she's full of most blessed condition.⁵

IAGO.—Blessed figs's end⁶ the wine she drinks is made of grapes,⁷ if she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor ; blessed pudding⁸ Didst thou not see her paddle⁹ with the palm of his hand ? Didst not mark that ?

ROD.—Yes, that I did ; but that was but courtesy.

IAGO.—Lechery, by this hand¹⁰ an index¹¹ and obscure prologue¹² to the history¹³ of lust and foul thoughts They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embraced together. Villanous thoughts, Roderigo ! when these mutualities¹⁴ so marshal the way,¹⁵ hard at hand comes the master and main exercise,¹⁶ the incorporate¹⁷ conclusion Pish!¹⁸ But, sir, be you ruled by me I have brought you from Venice Watch you to-night, for the command, I'll lay't upon you. Cassio knows you not I'll not be far from you do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline¹⁹ or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably ministerSir, he is rash and very sudden in choler,²⁰ and haply may strike at you provoke him, that he may ; for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny, whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio.²¹ So shall you have a shorter journey²² to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer²³ them ; and the impediment²⁴ most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

ROD.—I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

IAGO.—I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel. I must fetch his necessities ashore. Farewell. [Exit.

1. Stamp mint or forge or make. 2. Counterfeit fabricate a thing in imitation of a true one. 3. That has.itself that has a mind which can create incidents, which look like, but are not, real opportunities ; (i.e.) if he cannot meet a real advantage, he can create one (to suit his purpose). 4. Folly.....after foolish and raw or inexperienced persons look to or seek after. 5. Blessed condition a happy and free disposition. 6. Figs's end : rubbish, or a worthless thing. 7. The wine grapes she uses the same kind of wine as others do, (i.e.) she is no better off in her likes and dislikes than others, (therefore, she is not of most blessed condition) 8. Pudding nonsense (originally, soft food intended for sick persons). 9. Paddle : play 10. By this hand : a mode of swearing, 11. Index the contents of a book, indicating what follows; an indirect reference. 12. Obscure prologue a dim or indirect preface. 13. History course of. 14. Mutualities ; mutual relations or dealings between the two. 15. Marshal the way lead or point to the way. 16. Hard..Exercise near by comes the chief or the only inference. 17. Incorporate . inevitable. 18. Pish an expression of contempt. 19. Tainting his discipline : disobeying his orders 20. Choler: anger. 21. Whose.Cassio the sub-siding of which (i.e. the mutiny) will not be possible unless Cassio is removed. 22. Shorter journey : shorter-cut. 23. Prefer them : 'them' here is superfluous. 24. The impediment : the verb 'will then be' is understood.

IAGO'S SOLILOQUY.

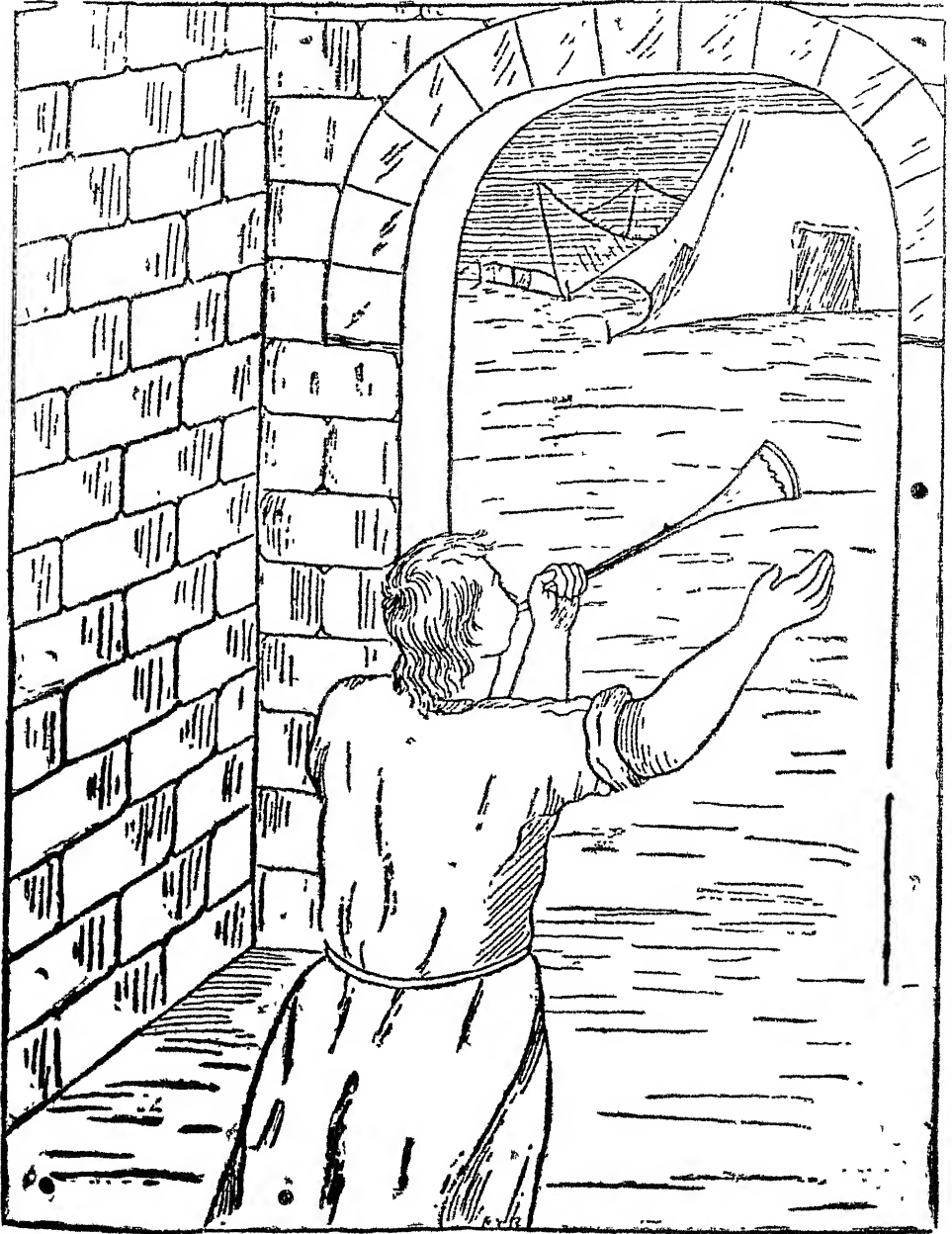
IAGO:—That cassio loves her, I do well believe it, that she loves him, 'tis apt,¹ and of great credit² the Moor,—howbeit that I endure him not,³—is of a constant, loving, noble nature, and I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona a most dear husband. Now, I do love her too, not out of absolute lust,—though peradventure I stand accountant for as great a sin,⁴—but partly led to diet my revenge,⁵ for that,⁶ I do suspect the lusty Moor hath leap'd into my seat;⁷ the thought whereof⁸ doth, like a poisonous mineral,⁹ gnaw my inwards,¹⁰ and nothing can or shall content my soul¹¹ till I am even'd with him, wife for wife;¹² or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor at least into a jealousy so strong that judgment cannot cure.¹³ Which thing to do, if this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash for his quick hunting, stand the putting-on, I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;¹⁴ abuse him¹⁵ to the Moor in the rank garb,¹⁶—and I fear Cassio with my night-cap too,¹⁷—make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me for making him egregiously¹⁸ an ass and practising upon his peace and quiet even to madness.¹⁹

'Tis here,²⁰ but yet confus'd,²¹ knavery's plain face is never seen till used.²²

[Exit.]

1. Apt: proper. 2. Great credit: greatly credible or believable. 3. Howbeit.....not: however much I dislike him. 4. Thoughsin though perhaps I too am to be accounted or regarded as great a sinner as others. 5. Led revenge: induced to feed or satisfy my revenge or revengeful spirit. (He means that he loves Desdemona mainly to make her a means whereby he could satisfy his vengeful spirit, by accusing her of misconduct and thereby inflaming Othello against her.) 6. For that for that purpose; (i.e.) the purpose of satisfying his revenge. 7. Hath.....seat: has used my bed (i.e.) my wife. (Refer to his speech in Act I; Sc. 3.—'And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets he has done my office'.) 8. Whereof: of which. 9. Mineral: substance. 10. Gnaw my inwards: eat into my vitals; (i.e.) burn my heart. 11. Content my soul: satisfy me. 12. Till.....wife: till I have evened (or made matters even or equal) with him, by using his wife as he has used mine. 13. Orcure: or, even if I fail to do so, (i.e., to use his wife), still I shall at least excite his jealousy (against her) so strongly that it cannot be cured (abated) even by calm reflection or thought. 14. Which thingon the hip: the Prose order is. 'To do which thing, I'll.....hip, if (only) this.... putting on.' The meaning is, 'To achieve that object, I must have Cassio in my grip (power), provided this worthless Venetian (Roderigo) whom I restrain (hold in) from his thoughtless rush (against Desdemona) stands (or is able to act up to or follow) my instigation. 15. Abuse him: condemn him (Cassio). 16. In the rank garb: in the coarsest dress or style. 17. And I.....too: for, I suspect that Cassio too has misconducted himself with my wife. (He refers to Cassio having kissed Emilia out of courtesy, soon after her landing in Cyprus) Night-cap, means, night-dress in which a husband sleeps with his wife. 18. Egregiously: thoroughly. 19. Practicing.....madness: working upon his peaceful mind (so as to confound it) and making him mad. 20. 'Tis here: the plans are here (i.e. head). 21. Confused: not clear. 22. Knavery's.....used: the plans of a Villain are not seen (known to others) till they are actually put into action.

A Herald proclaims a Holiday, to rejoice at the destruction of the Turkish fleet and also in honor of Othello's nuptials.



Holidays are ever welcome to people at large

(Pic. 17.)

SCENE II, A STREET.

A HERALD, DELIVERING OTHELLO'S PROCLAMATION OF HOLIDAY, ETC,

HER:—It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant General, that,—upon certain tidings now arrived, importing¹ the mere perdition² of the Turkish fleet,—every man put himself into triumph,³ some to dance, some to make bonfires,⁴ each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him;⁵ for, besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed.⁶ All offices⁷ are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told⁸ eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble General, Othello!

1. Importing touching or concerning. 2. The mere perdition. the utter destruction. 3. Put ... triumph · celebrate the victory, by having a holiday. 4. Bonfires illumination. 5. Each.....him let each man take to such sports and enjoyments as his inclination guides him. 6. So ..proclaimed. Prose order and meaning, (It) was his pleasure (that) so much should be proclaimed (announced or made known). 7. Offices: public buildings, or the rooms in the castle where refreshments are served. 8. Told · struck.

Iago, for his own nefarious ends, seduces Cassio to drink.



(1) How Fools succumb to the evil suggestions of their companions and convert their merry-making into misery-making !

(2) O, what unseen dangers lurk in intoxicating drugs !

(Pic 18.)

SC. III. A HALL IN THE CASTLE.

OTH :—Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night: let's teach ourselves that honourable stop¹ not to outspout discretion.²

CAS :—Iago hath direction what to do. but, notwithstanding, with my personal eye will I look to't.

OTH :—Iago is most honest. Michael, good night, to-morrow, with your earliest,³ let me have speech with you. (To Des) Come, my dear love, the purchase made, the fruits are to ensue,⁴ that profit's yet to-come 'twixt me and you. [Exit Oth. Des. &c.]

[Iago now enters and tempts Cassio with two baits, Woman and Wine.]

CAS :—Welcome, Iago, we must to the watch.

IAGO :—Not this hour, Lieutenant; 'tis not yet ten o' the clock. Our general cast us⁵ thus early for the love of his Desdemona, who⁶ let us not therefore blame; he hath not yet made wanton the night⁷ with her; and she is sport for Jove.

CAS :—She's a most exquisite⁸ lady.

IAGO :—And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

CAS :—Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

IAGO :—What an eye she has! Methinks, it sounds a parley to provocation.

CAS :—An inviting eye; and yet, methinks, right modest.

IAGO :—And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

CAS :—She is indeed perfection.

IAGO :—Well, happiness to their sheets!⁹ Come, Lieutenant, I have a stoup¹⁰ of wine, and here, without, are a brace¹¹ of Cyprus gallants¹² that would fain¹³ have a measure to the health of black Othello.

CAS :—Not to-night, good Iago I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish that courtesy¹⁴ would invent some other custom of entertainment.

IAGO :—O! they are our friends; but one cup I'll drink for you.

CAS :—I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified¹⁵ too, and behold, what innovation¹⁶ it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task¹⁷ my weakness with any more.

IAGO :—What, man! 'tis a night of revels; the gallants desire it.

CAS :—Where are they?.....I'll do 't; but it dislikes me. [Exit.]

1 Let's... stop let us know how far we can wisely go. 2. Not... discretion not to exceed the proper limit shown by Reason 3. With your earliest: at your earliest convenience 4. The... ensue when once a bargain has been made and the thing obtained, one must look to its best use. (i.e.) 'We are already married, and we shall now spend sometime in enjoyment.' 5. Cast us: sent us away. 6 Who: whom, (referring to Othello.) 7 Made wanton the night: made the night wanton or playful in lustful sport. 8. Exquisite: fine, refined or excellent. 9. Sheets. bed 10 Stoup: a flask of wine. 11. Brace: couple. 12. Gallants: brave men. 13. Fain: willingly. 14. Courtesy: rules of hospitality. 15. Craftily qualified: secretly diluted with water, &c. 16. Innovation change (giddiness). 17. Task: tax or burden.

IAGO'S SOLILOQUY.

IAGO:—(1) If I can fasten¹ but one cup upon him, with that which he hath drunk to-night already, he'll be as full of quarrel and offence as my young mistress' dog² (2) Now, my sick³ fool Roderigo, whom Love has turn'd almost the wrong side out,⁴ to Desdemona hath to-night carous'd⁵ potations⁶ pottle-deep;⁷ and, *he's to watch*. (3) Three lads of Cyprus, noble⁸ swelling spirits,⁹ that hold their honours in a waiy distance,¹⁰—the very elements¹¹ of this warlike isle,—have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,¹² and *they watch too*. (4) Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards, am I to put our Cassio in some action that may offend the isle. But, here they come! If consequence do but approve my dream,¹³ my boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.¹⁴

[Cas. Mon. &c., enter and drink.]

CAS:—'Fore God, they have given me a rouse already.

MON:—Good faith, a little one; not past a pint, as I am a soldier.

IAGO:—Some wine, ho!

(Sings.) And let me the canakin* clink, clink; a can or mug.
 And let me the canakin clink:
 A soldier's a man;
 A life's but a span;
 Why, then, let a soldier drink.

CAS:—'Fore God, an excellent song!

IAGO:—I learned it in England, where indeed they are most potent in potting,¹⁵ your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied¹⁷ Hollander—drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.....

O sweet England! (Sings)

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| (1) King Stephen was a worthy peer,* | *Noble-man |
| His breeches cost him but a crown,* | *5 Shillings |
| He held* them sixpence all too dear, | *Regarded |
| With that, he call'd the tailor lown.* | *Fool |
| (2) He was a wight* of high renown, | *Person |
| And thou art but of low degree. | |
| 'Tis pride that pulls the country down, ¹⁸ | |
| Then, take thine auld cloak about thee: ¹⁹ | |

1. Fasten: force. 2. Dog an animal that is easily excited and barks at strangers.
 3. Sick: love-sick. 4. Turn'd.....out: changed his wits in a wrong direction.
 5. Carous'd: freely drunk. 6. Potations drafts. 7. Pottle deep. a pottle is a pot containing four pints. ('pottle-deep' is 'the whole of the pot.' 8. Noble belonging to nobility. 9. Swelling spirits high and excitable tempers 10. That... distance. that prudently regard their personal honor or respect far above the common people. 11. The very elements: the very excitable spirits, (like fire and water when blown upon by wind). 12. Fuster'dcups. intoxicated with many cups. 13. If. ... dream: if the result is as I plan 14. My boat. ... stream I get on with favourable circumstances 15. A life ...drink one's life being short, one must enjoy oneself whenever one can, more so, a soldier whose life is exposed to dangers) 16. Potent in potting powerful (or profuse) in drinking. 17. Swag-bellied, big-bellied. 18. 'Tis ..down it is the pride of birth which creates caste and class distinctions, making people exclusive, and which finally ruins a country. 19. Then, thee therefore, (give up your assumed dignity, and wear the old simple dress (and be homely)).

CASSIO IS NOW DRUNK AND GOES OUT.

CAS :—Why, this is a more exquisite ¹ song than the other.

IAGO :—Will you hear't again?

CAS :—No ; for, I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things.² Well, God's above all ; and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

IAGO :—It's true, good Lieutenant.

CAS :—For mine own part—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

IAGO :—And so do I too, Lieutenant.

CAS :—Ay ; but, by your leave, not before me ; the Lieutenant is to be saved before the Ancient. Let's have no more of this ; let's to our affairs. God forgive us our sins ! Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk ; this is my Ancient ; this is my right hand, and this is my left hand. I am not drunk now, I can stand well enough, and speak well enough ³

ALL :—Excellent well.

CAS :—Why, very well, then: you must not think, then, that I am drunk.
(Exit. Roderigo appears, but is sent after Cas.)

MON :—To the platform, masters ; come, let's set the watch.⁴

IAGO :—You see this fellow that is gone before ; he is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar and give direction ; and do but see his vice,⁵ 'tis to his virtue a just equinox,⁶ the one as long as the other ; 'tis pity of him. I fear the trust Othello puts him in, on some odd time of his infirmity, will shake this island.⁷

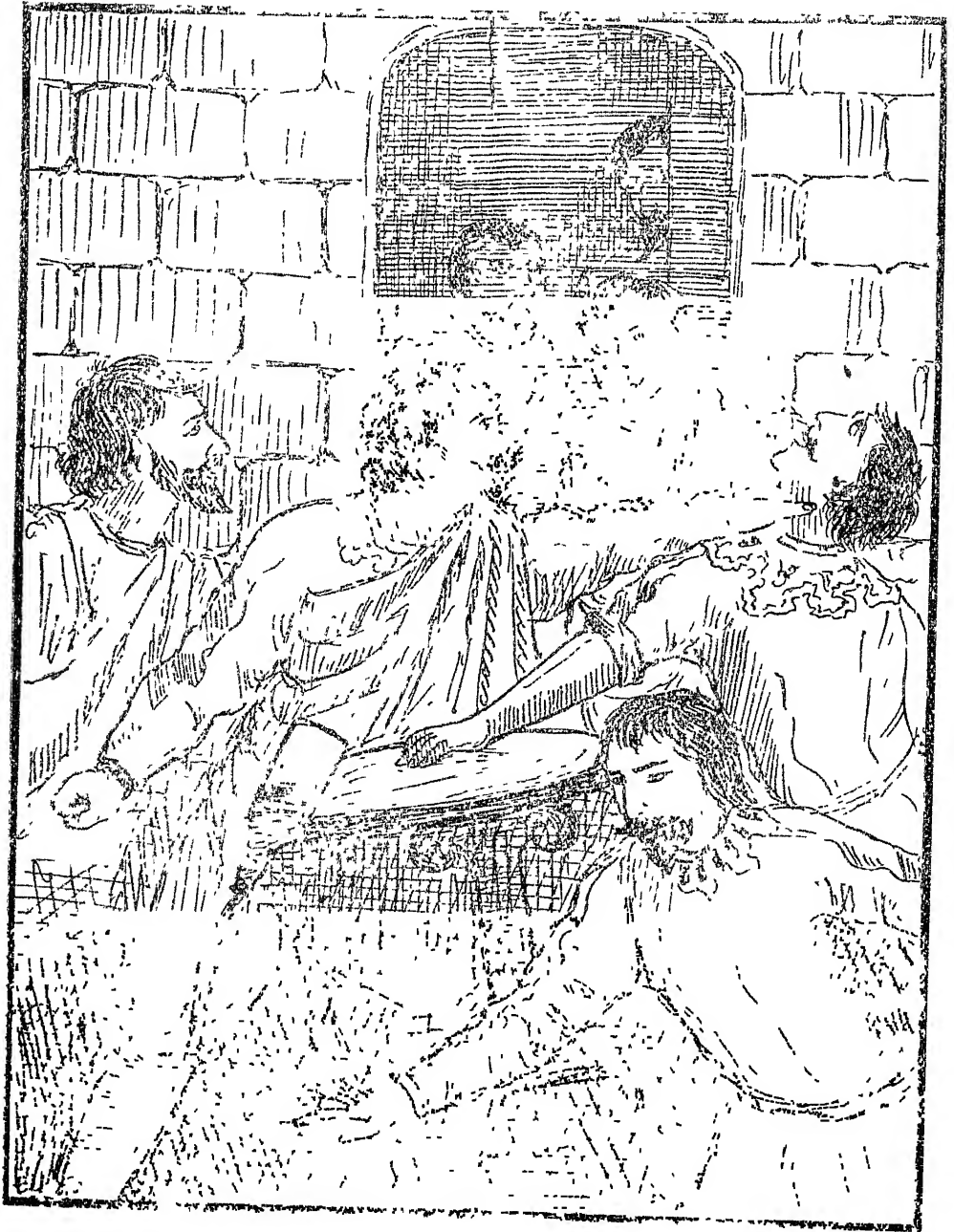
MON :—But, is he often thus ?

IAGO :—'Tis ever more the prologue to his sleep ;⁸ He'll watch the horologe⁹ a double set,¹⁰ if drink rock not his cradle.¹¹

MON :—It were well the General were put in mind of it.¹² Perhaps he sees it not ; or, his good nature prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio, and looks not on his evils. Is not this true ?

1. Exquisite exceedingly fine. 2. Those things. such as drinking, feasting etc., 3. These are the half-senseless and unconnected utterances of a man under the influence of liquor. 4. Set the watch post the sentries. 5. He...vice. he is a great soldier, yet he is given to this vice. 6. Equinox Equinox is the time when the Sun is so placed in the heavens that the day and night are of equal length here it means, 'counter-part, or equal.' 7. I.....Island. I am afraid that the confidence that Othello has in him (in respect of important duties) will at any moment of his (Cassio's) weakness, create trouble in this island. 8. 'Tissleep: it is all the more an index or indication of his negligence through sleep; that is, whenever he drinks, he loses his senses and becomes unconscious. (What Iago means is that if Cassio goes on like this, he will naturally neglect his duties.) 9. Horologue: a time-piece or hour-glass. 10. Double-set: doubly or twice as much. 11. He'll.....cradle. if, by drinking he does not sleep, he will keep awake and watch double time (i.e.) day and night. 12. Put in mind of it: informed of it.

Drunk Cassio is soon involved in a fight with Roderigo and others.
Iago asks Roderigo to go out and cry a mutiny.



When Drink is in, Wits are out.

(Pic. 19.)

Drunken Cassio is soon involved in a fight with Roderigo and others:

Iago goes out and Cries a Mutiny.

IAGO.—(Aside to him) How now, Roderigo! I pray you, after the Lieutenant; go. [Exit Roderigo]

MON.—And, 'tis great pity that the noble Moor should hazard¹ such a place as his own second with one of an ingraft² infirmity. It were an honest action to say so to the Moor.

IAGO.—Not I, for this fair island³ I do love Cassio well, and would do much to cure him of this evil But hark! what noise? (Cry within,) 'Help! Help!' [Re-Enter Cassio, driving in Roderigo.]

CAS.—You rogue! you rascal!

MON.—What's the matter, Lieutenant?

CAS.—A knave teach me my duty!⁴ I'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle⁵

ROD.—Beat me!

CAS.—Dost thou prate, rogue? [Striking Roderigo.]

MON.—(Staying him.) Nay, good Lieutenant; I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

CAS.—Let me go, sir, or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.⁶

MON.—Come, come, you're drunk.

CAS.—Drunk! [They fight.]

IAGO.—(Aside to Roderigo.) Away, I say; go out, and cry a mutiny. Nay, good Lieutenant! Alas, gentlemen! [Exit Roderigo.]

Help, ho! Lieutenant! sir!, Montano! sir!, Help, masters! Here's a goodly watch indeed!⁷ (Bell rings.)

Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablo,⁸ ho!—

The town will rise; God's will! Lieutenant! hold,

You will be sham'd for ever⁹ [Enter Othello and Attendants.]

OTH.—What is the matter here?

MON.—Zounds! I bleed still; I am hurt to the death.

OTH.—Hold, for your lives!¹⁰

IAGO.—Hold, ho, Lieutenant! Sir! Montano! gentlemen! have you forgot all sense of place and duty? Hold! the General speaks to you; hold, for shame!¹¹

1. Hazard: risk or entrust. 2. Ingraft: ingrafted; rooted or inborn. 3. Not.....island. I shall not do so, even if I got this beautiful island for my reward. 4. A knave...duty: here is a knave who has the impertinence to teach me my duty. 5. Twiggen: made of twigs, covered with wicker-grass. The meaning of the line is: I will beat him so severely as to make him appear like a twiggen-bottle, (i.e.) with marks all over. 6. Mazzard: head. 7. Here's..... indeed: Is this the kind of watch or guard they are keeping? 8. Diablo. devil, confusion (death and darkness). 9. Hold.....ever: stop, or, you will be disgraced for ever. 10. Hold.....lives: stop, on pain of death. 11. For shame; if you have shame; it is shameful.

The Town is alarmed at the mutiny; the tumult brings to the scene Othello who is angry and bent on quelling the disorder.



Panics are easy to create but hard to quell.

(Pic. 20.)

The Town is Alarmed: Othello is angry and demands explanation.

OTH.—Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth this? Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that which Heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?¹ For Christian shame,² put by³ this barbarous brawl; he that stirs next, to carve for⁴ his own rage, holds his soul light,⁵ he dies upon his motion. Silence that dreadful bell: It frights the isle from her propriety⁶ What is the matter, masters? Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,⁷ speak, who began this? On thy love, I charge thee.

IAGO—I do not know; friends all but now, even now, in quarter⁸ and in terms⁹ like bride and groom devesting them for bed;¹⁰ and then, but now,—as if some planet had unwitting men,¹¹—swords out,¹² and tilting¹³ one at other's breast, in opposition bloody I cannot speak any beginning to this peevish odds,¹⁴ and would, in action glorious I had lost those legs that brought me to a part of it!¹⁵

OTH.—How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?¹⁶

CAS.—I pray you, pardon me; I cannot speak

OTH.—Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil,¹⁷ the gravity and stillness of your youth the world hath noted,¹⁸ and your name is great in mouths of wisest censure.¹⁹ What's the matter, that you unlace²⁰ your reputation thus, and spend your rich opinion for the name of a night-brawler?²¹ Give me answer to it.

MON.—Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger; your officer, Iago, can inform you, (while I spare speech which something now offends me)²² of all that I do know, nor know I ought by me that's said or done amiss this night, unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,²³ and to defend ourselves it²⁴ be a sin when violence assails us

1. Are we . Ottomites Have we become Turks (barbarians) and taken to quarrelling among ourselves which even they, for fear of God, do not do?
2. For Christian shame it is a disgrace for a Christian 3 Put by stop. 4. to carve for to indulge in. 5 He that light he that moves next to join the quarrel to satisfy his personal feelings of anger or spite, will do so at the risk of his life. 6. Propriety . proper or peaceful condition. 7. Dead with grieving overcome with sorrow. 8. Quarter concord or harmony. 9. Terms . expression. 10 Friends. . . .bed . they were friends till now, as peaceful and amiable as a newly married couple. 11. As if . men . as if the influence of some evil star had unwitting men (i.e.) deprived them of their senses, or made them mad. 12. Swords out: (they are with their) swords out. 13. Tilting: striking. 14. Peevish odds foolish quarrel 15. And would . it and I wish I had rather lost my legs in some heroic fight, than have used them to come here to this scene of quarrel. 16 You . . forgot you have forgotten yourself: (i.e) you have lost your self-control. 17. Wont be civil . used or accustomed to be calm. ('Civil' as opposed to 'martial disposition') 18. The gravity.... noted: you are known.abroad as a grave and quiet young man 19. Yourcensure: you are spoken well of even by wise judges or critics. (Censure: opinion or judgment) 20. Unlace . undo, lose or destroy. 21 Spend... opinion . Waste or lose that good opinion. 22. While Ime: as I do not wish to speak owing to certain scruples or delicate feelings which forbid me from pleading my own cause. 23. Unless.....vice . unless it be a wicked thing to entertain charity, love or kindness to one's self. 24. It: put in for the sake of metre, otherwise unnecessary.

Othello comes on the scene, enquires, and on Iago's report, dismisses Cassio.



Even Great Minds get panic-stricken in times of tumult and danger.

Seeing Othello angry, Iago explains and incriminates Cassio, who is dismissed.

OTH.—Now, by Heaven, my blood begins my safer guides to rule;¹ and passion, having my best judgment collied,² assays to lead the way. If I once stir, or do but lift this arm, the best of you shall sink in my rebuke.³ Give me to know how this foul rout⁴ began, who set it on, and he that is approv'd⁵ in this offence, though he had twinn'd⁶ with me—both at a birth—shall lose me. What! in a town of war,⁷ yet wild,⁸ the people's hearts brimful of fear, to manage⁹ private and domestic quarrel, in night, and on the court and guard of safety!¹⁰ 'Tis monstrous! Iago, who began 't?

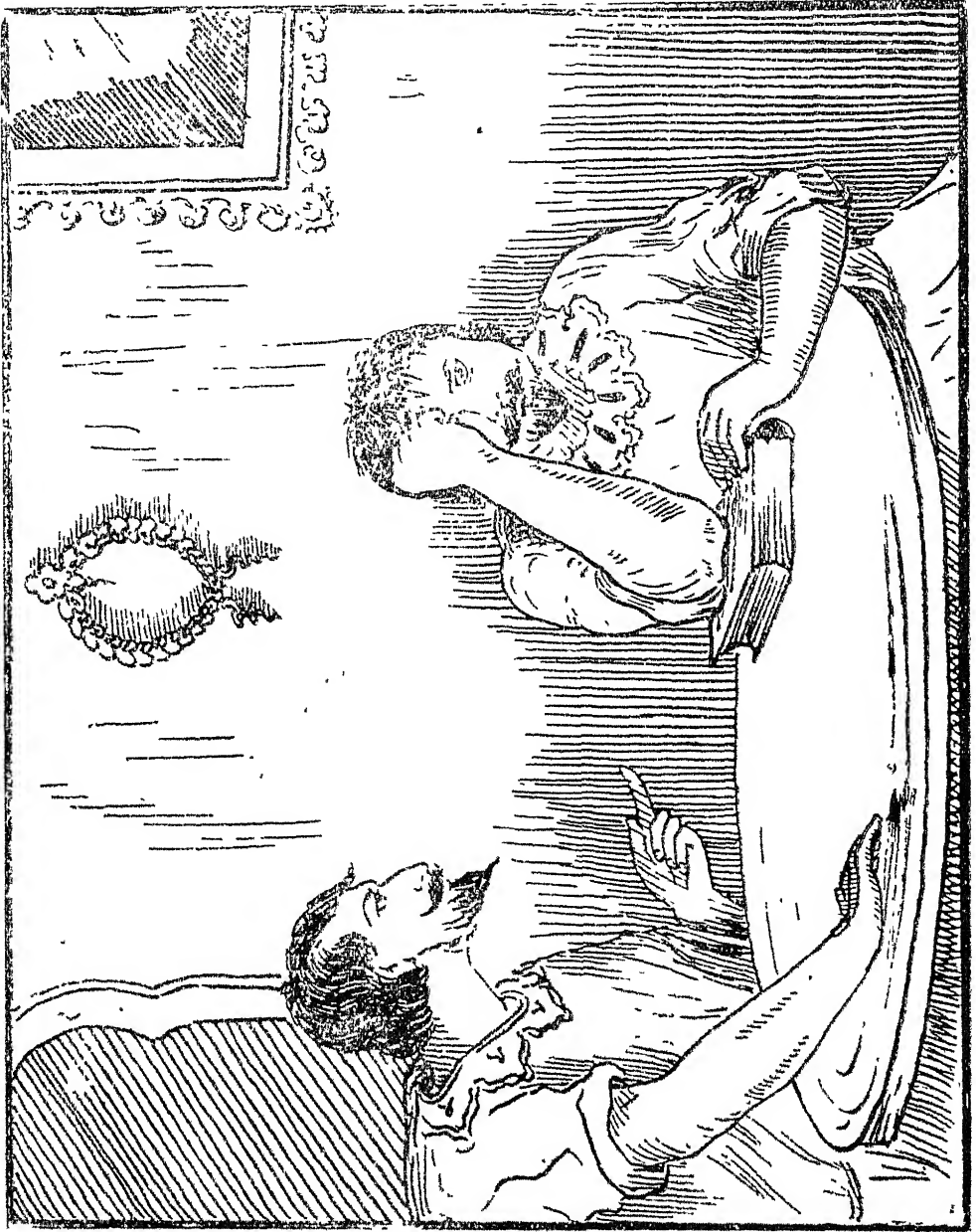
MON.—If partially affin'd, or leagu'd in office,¹¹ thou dost deliver more or less than truth, thou art no soldier.

IAGO.—Touch me not so near: I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth than it should do offence to Michael Cassio; yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth shall nothing¹² wrong him. Thus it is, General! Montano and myself being in speech, there comes a fellow crying out for help, and Cassio following with determin'd sword to execute upon him.¹³ Sir, this gentleman steps in to Cassio and entreats his pause;¹⁴ myself the crying fellow did pursue, lest by his clamour,—as it so fell out,—the town might fall in fright; he, swift of foot, outran my purpose,¹⁵ and I return'd the rather for that¹⁶ I heard the clink and fall of swords, and Cassio high in oath which, till to-night, I ne'er might say before.¹⁷ When I came back,—for this was brief,—I found them close together, at blow and thrust, even as again they were when you yourself did part them. More of this matter can I not report: but men are men; the best sometimes forget: though Cassio did some little wrong to him,¹⁸ as men in rage strike those that wish them best, yet surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd from him that fled, some strange indignity¹⁹ which patience could not pass.

OTH.—I know, Iago, thy honesty and love doth mince²⁰ this matter, making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee; but never more be officer of mine. (Enter Des.) Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up! (To Cas.) I'll make thee an example. [Exit with Des.]

1. My blood.....to rule. my anger begins to overcome or prevail over my safer guides, such as patience and calmness of judgment. 2. Collied. blackened as coal, darkened or obscured. 3. Rebuke. punishment. 4. Foul rout: wicked riot or quarrel. 5. Approved: proved to be guilty. 6. Twinned; lived as a twin brother. 7. Town of war: garrisoned town, ready for defence against an attack. 8. Yet wild: still excited. 9. To manage: to bring about. 10. On the court..... safety: "on the very spot and guarding place of safety." 11. Partially affin'd: partly related. Leagu'd: connected. 12. Nothing. not. 13. With determined sword to execute upon him. with sword determined to execute or carry out his revenge upon him. 14. Entreats his pause. requests him to stop. 15. Outran my purpose, i.e., the purpose of catching him. 16. For that because. 17. Which..... before: which I could not say of him before. 18. To him: meaning Montano. 19. Indignity: disgrace, insult. 20. Mince this matter: make little or light of this affair.

Iago, seeing Cassio greatly dejected, enquires into the cause, and suggests a way to regain Othello's favour.



People in distress easily fall a prey to designing persons.

(Pic. 22.)

CASSIO AND IAGO.—ON REPUTATION, DRINK, REMEDY.

IAGO —What' are you hurt, Lieutenant?

CAS :—Ay, past all surgery.¹

IAGO:—Marry, Heaven forbid!

CAS :—Reputation, reputation, reputation! O! I have lost my reputation. I have lost the immortal part of myself,² and what remains is bestial.³ My reputation, Iago, my reputation!

IAGO.—As I am an honest man, I thought you had received some bodily wound, there is more sense⁴ in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition,⁵ oft got without merit, and lost without deserving. You have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute⁶ yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover⁷ the General again, you are but now cast in his mood,⁸ a punishment more in policy than in malice,⁹ even so as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion¹⁰ Sue to him again, and he is yours.

CAS :—I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive¹¹ so good a commander with so slight, so drunken and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk! and speak parrot¹² and squabble, swagger, swear, and discourse fustian with one's own shadow!¹³ O thou invisible spirit of wine! if thou hast no name to be known by let us call thee devil!

IAGO.—What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

CAS.—I know not. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.¹⁴ O God! that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains,¹⁵ that we should with joy, pleasance,¹⁶ revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

IAGO:—Why, but you are now well enough; how came you thus recovered?

CAS :—It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath; one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.¹⁷

1. Surgery medical aid. 2. The ...myself my moral character which will last longer than my body. 3. Bestial animalic. (Referring to the body without the higher human virtues). 4. Sense. meaning (some editors use 'offence' instead of this word). 5. Idleimposition a useless and wrong creation of society. (imposition that which has been imposed or fastened upon). 6. Repute: think or fancy. (Iago is playing upon the different meanings of the word 'Repute.') 7. Recover: get back (the favour of) 8. Cast in his mood dismissed by him in a fit of anger. 9. A punishment.....malice a punishment which is more for discipline than out of any real ill-will. 10. Even solion just as one would beat an innocent dog in order to frighten an angry lion. (Cassio's punishment is compared to the beating of a dog; and the public to the lion). 11. Rather.....deceive: rather continue to be hated than to cause further disappointment to, etc., 12. Speak parrot: speak idly (referring to the nonsensical words of a drunken man.) 13. Discourse.....shadow: talk fustian or nonsense with oneself. 14. Wherefore: of the cause. 15. That menbrains; that people should put in their mouths liquor which proves an enemy to them and deprives them of their senses. 16. Pleasance: merry-making. 17. One.....myself: one weakness of mine leads me on to another, only to cause me to hate my self.

IAGO SUGGESTS A WAY TO CASSIO TO REGAIN THE FAVOR OF OTHELLO.

IAGO:—Come, you are too severe a moraler.¹ as the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen, but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

CAS:—If I ask him for my place again, he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra,² such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! Every inordinate cup³ is unblest⁴ and the ingredient⁵ is a devil.

IAGO.—Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against it. And, good Lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

CAS:—I have well approved⁶ it, sir. I, drunk!

IAGO.—You or any man living may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our General's wife is now the general: I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark and denotement⁷ of her parts and graces: confess yourself freely to her, importune⁸ her; she'll help to put you in your place again. She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice⁹ in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint¹⁰ between you and her husband, entreat her to splinter;¹¹ and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming,¹² this crack of¹³ your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

CAS:—You advise me well.

IAGO:—I protest,¹⁴ in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

CAS:—I think it freely;¹⁵ and betimes¹⁶ in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake¹⁷ for me. I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.¹⁸

IAGO:—You are in the right. Good night, Lieutenant; I must to the watch.

CAS:—Good night, honest Iago!

[Exit Cassio.]

1. Moraler: a moralist or moraliser; one who preaches philosophy. 2. Hydra, a monster (in Greek mythology) with many heads. (what Cassio means is, 'Even if I had several tongues to plead my cause with'). 3. inordinate cup: a glass of liquor taken in excess. 4. Unblest: cursed. 5. Ingredient content (of the cup). 6. Approved: proved. (I.....at: I have it already well proved). 7. Denotement: noting. 8. Importune: implore or beg. 9. Vice: defect. 10. Broken joint: breach in friendship. 11. Splinter: to put a broken bone in splinter or pieces of wood so as to set and heal the bone; here it means, mend. 12. My..... naming: I will readily stake my fortunes by any wager or bet that is worthy. 13. This crack.....love: This love, now cracked, but when mended, shall grow.... 14. Protest: declare or affirm so. 15. I think it freely. I accept your advice fully. 16. Betimes: early. 17. Undertake: to do (this task.) 18. I am.....here: if in this I do not succeed, I will become desperate.

Iago's Soliloquy.

IAGO.—And what's he,¹ then, that says I play the villain?
 When this advice is free I give and honest,²
 Probab³ to thinking, and indeed the course
 To win the Moor again? For, 'tis most easy
 The inclining Desdemona to subdue⁴
 In any honest suit. She's fram'd as fruitful
 As the free elements⁵ And then, for her
 To win the Moor, were't renounce his baptism,⁶
 All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,⁷
 His soul is so enletter'd⁸ to her love,
 That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
 Even as her appetite⁹ shall play the god
 With¹⁰ his weak function¹¹ How am I then a villain
 To counsel Cassio to this parallel¹² course,
 Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!¹³
 When devils will the blackest sins put on¹⁴
 They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,¹⁵
 As I do now, for while this honest fool
 Pries¹⁶ Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
 And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
 I'll pour this pestilence¹⁷ into his ear
 That she repeals¹⁸ him for her body's lust;
 And, by how much she strives to do him good,
 She shall undo her credit with the Moor.¹⁹
 So will I turn her virtue into pitch,<²⁰
 And out of her own goodness²¹ make the net
 That shall enmesh them all.

1. What's he who is he? 2. When.....honest the prose order is, when this advice I give is free and honest. 3. Probab³ to thinking probable to thinking i. e. sensible or admissible thought. 4. To subdue to subdue the inclining Desdemona. (i.e.) to induce or to enlist the support of the already favourably disposed Desdemona. 5. She's ..elements' by her nature she is as bounteous or generous as the air, rain, light etc. 6. Were't ..baptism even if he were to give up his Christian religion. (Baptism a ceremony when water is applied to confirm one's religion). 7. All seals .. sins all the marks of Christianity. (Redeemed sin sin of humanity redeemed or taken away by Christ by his death, (i.e.) Christian Salvation). 8. enletter'd bound. 9. Appetite passion. 10. Shall .. with shall contro. or dominate. 11. Weak function weak faculties. 12. Parallel: a course running parallel to his own good, not circuitous but plain; not opposed, right or favourable. 13. Divinity of hell. god of hell or Satan. 14. When: when the devils (wicked persons) will put.....sins (i.e.) will plan to commit the worst crimes. 15. They do.....shows: to begin with, they suggest or show their plans to be heavenly—conducive to good, or excellent. 16. Pries continuously implores. 17. Pestilence poison (of jealousy). 18. Repeals recalls. 19. And by... Moor: and the more she tries to do good to him (Cassio), the more will she lose her own credit with the Moor. 20. Pitch: black substance like melted tar Iago here means, 'I will change her virtue or chastity into the blackest vice of unchastity.' 21. Goodness; free and open nature.

(To Rod.) How now, Roderigo!

ROD:—I do follow here in the chase, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry.¹ My money is almost spent: I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgelled,² and I think the issue will be,—I shall have so much experience for my pains,³ and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

IAGO:—How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees? Thou know'st we work by wit⁴ and not by witch craft,⁵ and wit depends on dilatory time⁶. Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee, and thou, by that small hurt, hast cashiered Cassio. Though other things grow fair against the sun, yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.⁷ Content thyself awhile.—By the mass,⁸ 'tis morning; pleasure and action make the hours seem short. Retire thee; go where thou art billeted⁹ away, I say, thou shalt know more hereafter. Nay, get thee gone. [Exit Roderigo.]

IAGO:—(To self) Two things are to be done. (a) my wife must move for¹⁰ Cassio to her mistress, I'll set her on (b) myself the while to draw the Moor apart, and bring him jump¹¹ when he may Cassio find soliciting his wife ay, that's the way; dull not device by coldness and delay.¹²

1. Onecry a hound that only barks: what Roderigo means is that he has not gained anything substantial for himself, but is only a looker-on of the show (i.e.) serving no useful purpose in the game. 2. Cudgelled: beaten with a cudgel or stick. 3. I shall... ..pains: I shall learn better wisdom for all my troubles. 4. Wit: intelligence. 5. Witch-craft: magic. 6. Wit.....time: intelligence takes time to produce results. (dilatory: delaying or prolonging). 7. Though .. .ripe though our plans progress favourably, yet those that mature early will produce results early. 8. Mass: morning prayers. a form of swearing. 9. Billeted, posted. 10. Move for: plead on behalf of. 11. Jump: just in time; exactly. 12. Dulldelay. Let me not mar my plan by indifference and delay.

A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ACT II.

PART I.

They Talk about the Storm and the Likely Fate of the Turkish Fleet.

The scene opens in a sea-port town in Cyprus. A severe storm has recently raged and has but just now abated. Montano, the Governor of the island, and a few others meet in an open place near the quay. Naturally, their conversation turns upon the recent storm, its severity and the havoc it has wrought. Every one is in suspense, fear and anxiety, expecting every moment the arrival of the Turkish Fleet and its attack on the town.

Montano opens the talk and asks his friends whether they can see any object on the sea. The first gentleman replies that he can see 'nothing at all,' and remarks that the sea is still boisterous. 'It is a high-wrought flood,' he says, and therefore,—

I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail (of the Turkish fleet).

Montano then gives out that, within his knowledge, this was the worst storm he has ever experienced. 'A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements,' he says and, even on land 'the wind hath spoke aloud.' He then surmises that, if only the wind

.....hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak (ships).....
Can hold the mortise?,

particularly when the waves rise mountain-high and dash themselves on the ships with force and pour down their waters. Therefore, he naturally questions, 'What shall we hear of this?,' referring to the hostile fleet.

Immediately comes up the second gentleman who gives his opinion that they will hear nothing but an utter wreck of the invading fleet, or 'a segregation of the Turkish Fleet,' as he puts it. And, in support of his conclusion, he draws their attention to the still extremely agitated condition of the angry sea. Such a state he has till then never seen; or, as he expresses in his own words,—

The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous mane,
Seems to cast water on the burning bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole.

That the Turkish fleet must have been dispersed, shattered or even drowned, is not impossible according to Montano, —

If that the Turkish fleet
Be not onshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible they bear it out;

PART II.

Arrival of Cassio's Boat, and the News of the Destruction of the Enemy's Fleet.

Just as they are discussing the possible fate of the enemy, there comes a third gentleman with a piece of glad news;—

News, lads! our wars are done.

For, as he gives out,—

The desperate tempest hath so, bang'd the Turks,
That their designment halts;

and, as for the source of his information, he says that

... a noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of the fleet.

Montano is agreeably surprised and so he asks his informant if it is really true. The third gentleman, in support of his statement, gives out the further news that

The ship is here put in,
A Veronesa;

and the person who gave him the information is no less than 'Michael Cassio, Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello.' It is he that 'is come on shore.' He then proceeds to tell them what he has himself learnt from Cassio,—

... the Moor himself's at sea.
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

'I am glad on't,' says Montano, 'for, 'tis a worthy governor.' The third gentleman further continues that

.....though he (Cassio) speak of comfort
Touching the Turkish fleet, yet he looks sadly;

for, according to Cassio, 'they (Cassio and Othello) were parted by foul and violent tempest,' and that Cassio 'prays the Moor be safe'

Montano expresses his high regard for the Moor and his opinion of the worth and capacity of the man;—

Pray Heaven he be;
For, I have served him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier.

Then, on the suggestion of Montano, they all proceed to the 'seaside' and look out towards the horizon, expecting to see a friendly sail in the distance,—

As well to see the vessel that's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello.

PART III.

*Arrival of Desdemona with Iago, Emilia, Etc., in a Boat:**The Sea-Beach is Crowded with People.*

They reach the sea-side; and Montano, as the Governor of the place, greets Cassio who has recently arrived and enquires after

Othello of whom he speaks in high terms. For this, Cassio expresses his thanks in reply to Montano --

Thanks, (to) you—the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor.

He also shows his deep concern for the safety of his lord, as when he prays,—

O, let the Heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For, I have lost him on a dangerous sea.

But 'Is he well shipp'd?' questions Montano, to which Cassio answers that

His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot,
Of very expert and approved allowance.

Therefore, he concludes that he is still very hopeful about the safety of Othello. His hopes, as he says, are 'not surfeited to death,' but 'stand in bold cure.' At this stage hurriedly comes up a fourth gentleman with the news that

The town is empty ; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry, ' A sail !'

Guns are being fired, and Cassio expresses his hopes to the effect,—'My hopes do shape him for the governor.' The second gentleman, however, who is not so sure that it is the Moor's ship that has come, merely remarks that, since the shots that are discharged are shots 'of courtesy,' all that they can expect is 'our friends at least,' and not the enemy. Cassio requests him to 'go forth and give us truth who 'tis that is arrived.'

He departs. And Montano and Cassio continue their conversation. Naturally, all their talk is about Othello whose late doings and expected arrival are uppermost in their minds for the time being. Montano asks Cassio, with reference to Othello, 'Is your General wived.' 'Most fortunately,' replies Cassio, 'he hath achieved a maid' whom, in his high regard for the fair-sex, he describes in his usual high-pitched style as one,—

That paragon's description and wild fame ;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation
Does tire the ingener.

At this point, the second gentleman arrives and, in answer to Cassio's query as to 'who has put in?', informs that 'Tis one Iago, Ancient to the General.' Cassio, who knows that Iago was the person deputed to escort Desdemona to Cyprus, straightaway waxes eloquent in praise of her beauty and her 'divine' quality, that even the elements of Nature, 'having sense of beauty,' respect her and consequently do no harm to her. In spite of the severe storm and the boisterous sea, 'He (Iago with Desdemona) has had most favourable and happy speed.' As Cassio later-on puts it, 'Iago's footing here anticipates our thoughts a sen-night's

voyage.' He also ascribes the safety of his travel, from Venice to Cyprus, to Desdemona's presence, in his company. For her sake, or in her presence, according to his high-flown figurative language,

Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,—
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel,—
As having sense of beauty, do omit,
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by the divine Desdemona.

Montano's curiosity is excited. He wonders who this lady can be and hence questions Cassio, 'What is she?' To this, the latter, again in his figurative way, answers that the lady is—

She that I spake of, our great captain's captain
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago.

Now that Desdemona has arrived, Cassio's thoughts naturally turn to Othello, her husband. He is on the tip-toe of expectation, eagerly awaiting the arrival of his ship. In his usual florid style, so characteristic of a Courtier or a Lady's man, he has shown his pleasure at Desdemona's safe arrival; and he now proceeds to express his wishes and prayers about Othello's safety on the sea,—

Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort.

PART IV.

(a) Desdemona Lands Ashore and is welcomed by Cassio and the people.

At this juncture, Desdemona disembarks from the ship and comes up to the place where Cassio, Montano and others are assembled. She is followed by her maid, Emilia, Iago, Roderigo, and other attendants.

Cassio, who has already extolled her charms and virtues, now invites the attention of Montano and others to her, in the same laudatory strain.

O, behold,
The riches of the ship is come on shore;

and turning to the huge crowd that has gathered there, he asks them to show her due respect by letting 'her have your knees.' Approaching the lady herself, he expresses the warmth of his welcome and greets her thus,—

Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of Heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round;

Desdemona thanks the 'valiant' Cassio for the hearty welcome and good wishes, and, naturally enough, questions him for tidings about her lord. Cassio answers her 'that he (her husband) has not yet arrived, but that so far as he knows 'that he's well and will be shortly here.' Desdemona is rather alarmed at this news and, in a voice trembling with anxiety and fear, hurriedly asks as to 'how lost you company?' To which, Cassio replies,—

The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship.

In the meantime, the crowd cries 'A sail, a sail!', and guns are heard, being fired as a friendly signal. The second gentleman adds that these indicate 'their greeting to the citadel' and that 'this likewise is a friend' that has arrived. Cassio requests him to go and find out the news, and so the gentleman departs.

(b) *Cassio's Manner of Welcoming the Ladies is Resented by Iago.*

Cassio then turns to Iago, the 'good Ancient,' and welcomes him. To Emilia, he similarly says, 'welcome, mistress,' and by way of further courtesy, even kisses her. Lest this should wound the feelings of Iago, he frankly speaks of his manner of doing courtesy, explaining himself thus,—

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

Iago, however, inwardly dislikes this bold manner of Cassio's courtesy; and, both by way of indirectly admonishing him, and directly censuring the rather voluble tongue of his wife, he caustically remarks, —

Sir, would she gave you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

To the surprise of all, Emilia keeps silent at this saucy remark of her husband. Desdemona, who is much attached to her maid, pleads for her and says 'Alas!', she is too modest,—and 'has no speech.' To this, comes the prompt rejoinder from Iago, and he says that she has too much of it. He complains that, even when he goes to bed and is inclined to sleep, she keeps on jabbering and would not let him alone. Here, however, he admits that

Before your ladyship, I grant
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides (me) with thinking.

These words of her husband uttered rather sneeringly, if not maliciously, in the presence of others, touch Emilia to the quick; and, to defend herself and keep up her respect, she replies in a modest yet dignified manner, refuting his complaint,—

You have little cause to say so.

(c) Iago, after scolding his wife, launches into a tirade, slandering the whole woman-kind

Iago, however, is irritated by her contradiction which he thinks rather impertinent on her part and so, by way of checking her, he says rather hurriedly and angrily, 'Come on, come on' Born and brought up in a peculiar view of the Philosophy of Life by which, not only natural human passions and desires, but even good and noble sentiments are, by a process of fallacious reasoning, derided, condemned and rejected, Iago is incapable of appreciating moral, aesthetic or physical beauty in any form, shape or degree. Not endowed by Nature with an aesthetic temperament, he cannot discover and rightly assess proportion, harmony or beauty of good conduct when he sees it. But, as it to make up for this deficiency, Nature has given him an extra keen, brilliant and commanding intellect. Possessing this, and backed up by a supreme self-confidence in his Will-power and resources, he has become narrow and self-centred in his out-look on life. With a cool malignity silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious of his interests, he pursues his vengeance like a sleuth-hound after his game. In his unbounded desire to have all for himself, he has become rather suspicious of other's motives and movements, and thus in consequence begun to envy and hate them. To the extent to which he finds others prosperous or blessed,—be it in the beauty of their person, or the goodness of their behaviour, or the happiness of their life,—to that extent, he thinks, he is deprived of those qualities and the goods of the world that make people happy. Hence, he is at once filled with envy and hate against them whenever he meets them. What wonder, then, that he thinks badly of them, speaks slanderously about them, and acts maliciously and injuriously towards them.

Thus, in scolding or admonishing his wife, he digresses into sweeping generalizations, and launches into a volley of abuse and slander against the whole of woman-kind. According to him, women are painted pictures of vanity when they go out; when at home in their parlours, they are garrulous, talking in tones loud and shrill like bells; in their kitchens, they are quarrelsome like wild-cats; in their dealings with others, when blamed or reproved for their wrongs or short-comings, they sarcastically put on the airs of injured innocence; they rise up like devils when they really feel offended; and while, during the day, as wives, they play and neglect their legitimate household duties, at night they behave like careful wives grumbling at the defects and imperfections of the day and blaming husbands in their beds. To use his own slanderous language,—

.....you are pictures out of doors,
Bells in your parlours, wild-cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

These offensive remarks naturally provoke Desdemona into an angry retort and rebuke, 'O, fie upon thee, slanderer.' But Iago has plenty of brass and would not be easily put down or silenced. He even proceeds to lay a particular stress on his statement by asserting—

Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk;

Not content with this assertion, he further proceeds to repeat and emphasize his shameless thoughts,—

You rise to play, and go to bed to work.
meaning thereby that, 'when you (women) get up in the morning, you but play and trifle with your true work,' but that, 'when you go to bed, your work is to think of how best to satisfy your carnal desires.'

This time, Emilia, who thinks that these remarks are aimed against her particularly, openly protests against them by saying—

You shall not write my praise.

And Iago readily replies, 'No, let me not,' meaning thereby that if he did, it would be all against her; for, in his opinion, she is full of wickedness. So, the best thing for her is to keep quiet and give him no cause for his stinging remarks. Naturally a warped creature, he has little appreciation for the qualities of the fair sex and little affection even for his wife.

(d) To Beguile the Tedium of Waiting, Desdemona hears Iago's Criticism of the Different kinds of Women.

Iago has an evil tongue, or rather an evil heart which reveals itself in the tongue. His tongue when it starts wagging is not swayed or curbed by any feeling of decency or of common courtesy even in the presence of ladies. This is made still more apparent when Desdemona, being somewhat depressed and gloomy because of the absence of tidings concerning her husband, tries to be cheerful, as when she says,—

I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am by seeming otherwise.

Rather idly and with no serious purpose, but to while away her time till the return of the second gentleman who was sent out to ascertain the cause of the firing of shots, she indifferently asks Iago as to

What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

Iago in reply makes out that he is an honest critic, and, if he were to correctly express what he considers to be proper, it might wound her feelings. Therefore, he says,—

O, gentle lady, do not put me to't;
For, I am nothing if not critical.

Desdemona is not so easily satisfied with this answer; and so, with a childish persistency, which though innocent, yet was at

times irritating, she asks Iago to come out with his description of herself. 'Come on, assay,' she says and once more asks him to 'Come, how wouldst thou praise me?' Iago, however pretends to be halting in his power of expression, though his brain is quick enough to formulate ideas,—

I am about it; but indeed my invention
Comes from my pate as birdling does from frize;
It plucks out brains and all; but my Muse labours
And thus she is delivered.

Then, he proceeds to give his reply to Desdemona's questions, and says,—

If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

This is intended to be a description of Desdemona's qualities; but, in reality, it is a general remark indirectly applicable to all women who, like her, are fair and wise. Apparently innocent in its meaning, it carries with it an indirect, slanderous innuendo. He means that fairness or beauty of person is intended to be used for the satisfaction of one's carnal lust; and, if such a fair woman is endowed with wisdom, wit, or cunning in addition, she will find ways and means to satisfy her lust or desires cleverly, without the knowledge of her husband. He means that all fair-complexioned and beautiful women are unchaste in their desires and conduct, and that only wise and fair women carry on their nefarious traffic very subtly and secretly, or without exciting the slightest suspicion of their husbands.

Conceited, proud and puffed up with the masculine strength of the male sex, Iago cannot be expected to conceive, cherish and give a better and nobler picture of the fair sex. And Desdemona, in her innocence of the world's secret ways and dark and crooked practices, is unable to see the slang hidden in his words. She takes him to mean plainly and, when he says that 'the one's for use, the other useth it', she thinks him to signify that a wise and beautiful woman will conserve her beauty for the greater love of her husband. She is therefore well-pleased with him and hence exclaims,— 'Well praised!' After this, both she and Emilia one after another, question him about other types of women, (a) black and witty; (b) fair and foolish; (c) foul and foolish: and lastly, (d) a really deserving woman.

Regarding 'the black and wise', Iago says,

If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

He means by this that if a woman is of a dark color and, if she possess intelligence enough, she will choose a man of fair-complexion for the satisfaction of her desires, rather than be content with a dark-coloured man for her husband. This remark is not relished by Desdemona who cries him down,—'Worse and worse.'

Emilia next suggests the other alternative type of women who are 'fair and foolish.' Iago is ready with his cynical attack even on this type; and, according to him, a fair woman was never foolish. In his opinion, every fair woman is cunning enough to know how to satisfy her carnal passions. She will secretly carry on with others and bring forth illegitimate children. In his own language,—

She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For, even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Such constant harping on the possibility of unchastity, with regard to every type of woman hitherto suggested, does not evidently commend itself to the simple, chaste and high-minded Desdemona. She therefore readily retorts that these remarks will suit and satisfy none but fools in their drunken moods.

Those are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh in the alehouse
Yet, in her desire to while away her time, and to keep herself engaged, she further questions him as to his views on women who are ugly and foolish. Iago replies that—

There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

In the view of Iago, Ugliness is only a variation of Beauty, a certain degree or state of it. Similarly, Foolishness is a type of Wisdom; there is only a difference of degree in these qualities. Therefore, in the fallacious or distorted logic of Iago, Ugliness is Beauty, while Foolishness is Wisdom. Hence, ugly and foolish women are the same as the fair and wise ones. He has already said, all fair women are at heart adulterous and if such fair women are also wise or cunning, they will carry on their adulterous practices, cleverly and undetected. He therefore quickly concludes that ugly and foolish women, who are equal to the fair and wise, are equally adulterous and equally cunning in their ways.

What an ignorant man Iago is,—bleak, dry, cold and callous,—absolutely devoid of the faculty of admiration! He conjoins the worst women with the best, and considers them as equals. Desdemona, therefore exclaims,—

O heavy ignorance! thou praisest the worst best.

Finally, she asks him as to what he has got to say concerning really deserving women, who are contented in their minds, chaste in conduct, and truly pure of heart. Such an admirable type of woman is surely above reproach, one whom even the worst slanderers are compelled to praise;

But, what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman
indeed, one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the
vouch of very malice itself?

In answer to this question, Iago first proceeds to give a fuller description of the qualities that such a woman should, but does not as a rule, possess,—

She that was ever fair and never proud,
 Had tongue at will and yet was never loud,
 Never lack'd gold and yet never went gay,
 Fled from her wish and yet said 'Now I may,'
 She that, being angered, her revenge being nigh,
 Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly;
 She that in wisdom never was so frail
 To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail;
 She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind,
 See suitors following and not look behind.

According to him, such a woman is endowed with beauty, but will not parade it. She has liberty of speech, but is reserved and careful in her words. She is wealthy, but will not care for trinkets. She can do things as she likes, but will pause and reflect before she acts. Though she has cause to be offended, she will not express her anger against wrong-doers, whom she will consider as victims who deserve to be pitied. She has superior wisdom, and can take things at their true value. She thinks deeply but does not blabber out her thoughts. Her hand is sought for by flattering suitors, but she will turn a deaf ear to their praises. A combination of beauty and innocence, liberty and moderation of speech, wealth and superior tastes, freedom and restraint in action, patience and absence of feelings of revenge, wisdom and sound judgment, deep thinking and weighing of words, admired of the gay but not admiring them in turn,—such is the 'deserving woman' of Desdemona. But, in the opinion of Iago, who is capable of seeing only wickedness in the world in all places and forms, in all degrees and gradations, such a woman is only an ideal, and therefore imaginary picture, not to be found in reality. Therefore, in concluding his picture, he says, 'she was a wight (woman)' but adds doubtingly. 'If ever such a wight were,'—implying that such a woman does not exist at all.

Desdemona cannot understand the significance of Iago's conditional or doubting clause. She is rather attracted by the descriptive touches of a noble-minded woman. Hence, she is anxious to know the conclusion,—the utility of such a woman to, the world. Therefore, she hastily questions him, 'To do what?'. Iago, however, in his one-sided wisdom, knows fully well that such a woman does not exist; and, if she does,—an utter improbability—she is of no use to others. She is a waster of time and doer of nothing; or, as he puts it—

To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

He means thereby that she is to feed and foster fools, and notice and note things of no import. He contemptuously shakes off the question by saying that such a woman exists only in the imagination of fools who have no serious affairs to attend to.

Desdemona is naturally disappointed with this conclusion of the matter. In her eagerness to know the manner of behaviour

of a really noble woman, from the glorious description given, she expected a grand conclusion. Iago's words, however, have belied her expectation and hence her bitter disappointment. She gives vent to this feeling when she openly says, 'O most lame and impotent conclusion!'. Turning to her maid, she advises her, 'Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband.'

(e) *Cassio's comment on Iago's critical remarks on women.*

Turning to Cassio, Desdemona asks him—

How say you Cassio? Is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

Cassio, who notices the displeasure of the lady, attempts to pacify her by informing that Iago, being a soldier and hence not much cultured, can but speak coarsely. Further, he is rather free just now and speaks out unreservedly,

He speaks home, madam, you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

(f) *Cassio's courtesy to Desdemona excites the malice of Iago.*

Cassio is highly cultured—refined in his manners, brave, benevolent, honest and chivalrous. When he talks to Desdemona, he shows every form of outward courtesy. He gently touches her palm and speaks in a low, soft and pleasing tone and voice. He puts on a smiling face and takes his fingers to his lips in courtesy and approbation of the lady's speech. Iago, who has already resolved within himself (Act I. Sc. 3) to concoct and publish the story that Cassio is 'too familiar with Othello's wife,' now tries to develop it into a certainty. He imports an evil meaning into the innocent, courteous movements of Cassio. While the latter is talking to Desdemona, he thinks of the wicked use he can make of the common gestures and expressions incidental to such talk. As Cassio gently touches the palm of Desdemona, Iago implies that 'he takes her by the palm'; when he speaks in a low voice, he takes it for 'whisper', when he smiles, he construes it as 'courtship'; and when he takes his fingers to his lips, he means that he kisses them. Thus does this great spider weave a tangled web round his victims,—artfully arranging, assorting and adjusting these trifles light as air, and making them look like formidable proofs of guilt. Taking advantage of these trifles, he now sets to work. Chuckling to himself, he wishes that Cassio's fingers 'were blisters (according to some, the proper word is Clyster-pipes) for your sake.' He says of his resolve that—

With as little a web as this, will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio.

And, seeing him smile at her, he mutters to himself—

Ay, smile upon her, do;
I will gyve thee in thine own courtship.

And thus he determines that, out of Cassio kissing his own fingers, he will bring about his downfall in office, rank and character ; as he says to himself—

If such tricks as these strip you out of your Lieutenantcy, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, (by way of courtesy).

In the meantime, trumpets are heard, and Iago loudly says that it is 'the Moor! I know his trumpet.' Cassio too confirms it, and Desdemona suggests, 'Let's meet him and receive him.' But, before they could proceed, Othello himself is seen approaching them ; and Cassio, in excessive joy, cries out, 'Lo, where he comes!'

PART V.

Othello's supreme bliss on meeting Desdemona.

Othello has successfully faced the cruel storm. He has safely reached the island of Cyprus and, disembarking from his ship, goes straight to the place where the people are assembled. Desdemona and Cassio, followed by others, go out to receive him and meet him half way. Seeing Desdemona in the Company, he is overjoyed at meeting her and so joyfully exclaims,—'O, my fair warrior!' Desdemona responds as fondly and fervently, by calling out,—'My dear Othello!' He embraces her with all the eagerness and affection his nature is capable of, and she returns his greeting and reciprocates his loving sentiments with equal warmth and tenderness. Othello then gives expression to his supreme joy in seeing her safely arrived before him,—

It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me.

He is now in that blessed mood when he feels perfectly happy and satisfied in every fibre of his being, when all his feelings, longings and desires are those of supreme content and felicity. The storm has raged furiously but Desdemona has arrived safely. He got separated from Cassio but has at last landed securely. Desdemona has been saved for him, and he, for her. What else is needed now to give him blissful calm and content excepting his dear wife who, he feared, was probably lost in that terrible storm? His meeting with Desdemona in Cyprus, in the face of the dangerous sea and the destructive storm was, according to his fears, a great improbability,—against all hopes and expectations. Now that he has met her, unharmed and safe, he is filled with deepest joy and contentment of his life. It is now immaterial to him how severely the storm has raged, or how dangerously the sea has been ruffled. The one precious object of his life and love has been secured and restored to him and he therefore now feels infinitely happy, satisfied and contented. And he thus gives expression to his feelings,—

O my souls' joy !
 If, after every tempest, come such calms,
 May the winds blow till they have waken'd death !
 And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas
 Olympus-high, and duck again as low
 As Hell's from Heaven !

He is therefore just now in the happiest frame of mind. He has no cares or anxieties to worry him. If death were to come now, he will die happily. He is afraid whether any other moment of supreme bliss, like this, will ever come to him again in his life. He knows that Life is a current full of dangerous eddies and whirl-pools. There may be troubles and turmoils which may mar his happiness in future, and death may not then be so peaceful and free from fears, anxieties and unfulfilled hopes. But, now, no such thing appears to mar or disturb his joy in life, and if he were now to die, he will die most happily. To use his own words,—

If it were now to die,
 'Twere now to be most happy;
 and the reason he adduces for this is,—
for, I fear,
 My soul hath her content so absolute
 That not another comfort like to this
 Succeeds in unknown fate.

'The Heavens forbid,' (i.e. the happening of Death referred to by Othello,) is the eager prayer of Desdemona who, on the contrary, hopes to enjoy a long, loving, prosperous conjugal life—

But that our loves and comforts should increase,
 Even as our days do grow !

'Amen to that, sweet powers!'—joyfully chimes in Othello to bless and confirm the fond hopes of his beloved partner. To him, however, any possible trouble in future is of no moment now. He is happy at present,—absolutely happy. So, he returns to that topic once again and reiterates his feelings—

I cannot speak enough of this content.

He means that he cannot give adequate expression to his supreme bliss. His heart is so full of joy that it chokes his further utterance, as it were,—

It stops me here; (he points to his heart); it is too much of joy.

He heartily wishes that no disagreement or discord should ever arise between them ; and that, if it ever did arise, it should end in speedy forgiveness and reconciliation, as now shown and symbolized by the sweet and loving kisses showered by him,—

And this, and this, the greatest discords be
 That e'er our hearts shall make.

The happy lovers are closely locked in each other's arms. For the time being, their bliss is so complete that they seem to be

unmindful of other concerns. But the Fates or Furies are laughing behind their backs. They are secretly conspiring to break their union and ruin their happiness. The words just expressed by Othello, though uttered in all innocence and as a matter of course, seem to be fraught with a dark and ominous import, viz,—

.....For, I fear,
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeds in unknown Fate.

Iago is the embodiment in human form of those unknown and unseen fates who are planning mischief for the happy couple. He witnesses the exchange of mutual love and greetings between them, and is at once filled with jealousy, spite and hatred against them. Within himself, he mutters and settles to mar their happiness. He will ruin their harmony, which he calls their music by unsuitable pegs or keys which he will presently be setting. So, whisperingly and aside, unheard and unnoticed by others, he says to himself,—

O, you are well tuned now!
But, I'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am.

After a few moments, Othello frees himself from the conjugal embrace and addresses the people that are assembled there and, to their great relief and joy, informs them as a certainty—

News, friends, our wars are done, the Turks are drowned.

Next, he enquires after his old acquaintance, Montano, former governor of that island. Turning to Desdemona, he assures her that, tho' a stranger to that place, she will have a cordial welcome from all,—

Honey, you shall be well desired in Cyprus;
I have found great love amongst them.

And, by way of apology for the exuberance of his love, so freely displayed, he says—

O my sweet!
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comforts.

Next, addressing Iago, whom he calls 'good Iago', he directs him to 'Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers.' Referring to the Captain who has so skilfully and safely piloted the ship thro' a nasty storm, he speaks to Iago,—

Bring thou the Master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.

Once more, turning to his wife, he expresses his joy,—

.....Come, Desdemona,
Once more, well met at Cyprus.

With this, the crowd disperses; and all, except Iago and Roderigo, move to their respective places.

PART VI.

Roderigo is treated to Iago's lop-sided philosophy and is instigated to embroil or assault Cassio.

Roderigo and Iago are now alone. The former anxiously looks to the latter for help to win over Desdemona yet. In fact, he was definitely made to understand this much while still in Venice, and it was ostensibly for this purpose that he was induced to proceed to Cyprus. But Iago's main object is, not so much to help his companion in achieving his end, as to make him his tool whereby he may wreak his own vengeance on Othello, and satisfy his greed for money. With his superior Intellect, he easily manages to bring Roderigo round. Though the latter now and then begins to suspect the dishonesty of his friend and protests to that effect, yet he is soon conciliated and satisfied.

Now that these two are alone together, Iago takes advantage of the occasion to explain his future plans of action to Roderigo, apparently for the latter's benefit, but in reality for his own end. So he tells the gull, 'Do thou meet me presently at the harbour', where he himself was proceeding to 'fetch his (Othello's) necessaries ashore.' At the same time, not to keep Roderigo in suspense, he calls him closer to reveal his dark purpose,— 'Come hither;.....list me.' And to produce a little moral exaltation in his victim, he has this tit-bit of ethical philosophy for him,—

If thou be'st valiant—as, they say, base men, being in love, have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them,—list (to) me.

These words have their desired effect, and while Roderigo is all attention, Iago proceeds to tell him,

The Lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard.

But this is a piece of information which Roderigo neither desires to know nor cares for, as it is in no way profitable to him. But Iago soon shows him how important and significant that information is even for Roderigo:

First, I must tell thee this; Desdemona is directly in love with him (Cassio).

This piece of news is a deliberate lie,—but concocted and put forth as a fact, with the ostensible object of turning it to Roderigo's advantage. But the latter is not inclined or persuaded to believe this news, as desired and expected by Iago. Hence, comes his exclamation,— 'With him! why, 'tis not possible.'

But Iago is not so easily non-plused by this rebuff. He now adopts the role of a preceptor and preacher, and imposes his superior Will and Personality on his weak-minded friend by

indirect coercion and direct blow-beating 'Lay thy finger thus,' he says rather in a commanding and solemn tone, and 'let thy soul be instructed.' Then, without giving Roderigo any further opportunity to speak, he proceeds straightaway to convince him of the truth of what he has said by means of apparently palpable and reasonable facts and proofs. 'Mark me,' he continues,—

.....with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies.

Then he puts forth the question, 'And will she love him still for prating?', and answers it himself with this assurance, 'Let not thy discreet heart think it.' For, he now argues with some show of Reason and Probability,—

Her eye must be fed (with fair and pleasant objects); and what delight shall she have to look on the devil (Othello)?

As for her carnal appetite, when once it is satisfied with the Moor, she must look for fresh and more attractive persons to stimulate or excite it. To use Iago's own words,—

When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be, again to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour (face), sympathy in years, manners and beauties.

And he forcibly emphasizes these points; and, with a show of truth and naturalness, he shows that the Moor is quite deficient in these respects and that therefore the result will be,—

Now, for want of these required conveniences (in Othello), her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor:

This is not impossible, for,

Very nature will instruct her in it,
And (therefore) compel her to some second choice.

This conclusion is so obvious, so seemingly cogent and reasonable that Iago takes it for a certainty and as a matter of course. If the premises are admitted, the conclusion, flowing from them, must be admitted too,—'It is a most pregnant and unforced position.' And, taking it for 'granted,' he hastens to draw this final inference,—

Who stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does?

For, he is 'a knave very voluble'; he can put on

The mere form of civil and humane seeming for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden-loose affection.

Without being any 'further conscionable' in his deeds, he is—

a slipper and subtle knave; a finder out of occasions; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself.

He is 'a devilish knave' cunning enough to worm himself into the good graces and love of women, who also like him because—

the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after.

He is 'a pestilent complete knave;' and therefore, no wonder,
the woman (Desdemona) hath found him already.

But, in spite of all these pompous and seemingly powerful arguments, be it said to the credit of Roderigo that he will not believe the conclusion drawn by Iago. He will not believe that Desdemona is of a loose character; and, according to him,

I cannot believe that in her; she's full of most blessed condition.

Desdemona is a lady of supreme Virtue, and to say anything else of her is to speak the untruth. But Iago, to whom noble sentiments are but fictions to fool the gulls with, cynically denounces the possibility or the existence of Virtue anywhere; and naturally, he denies it in Desdemona. 'Blessed fig's-end!' is his contemptuous retort to Roderigo's praise of her (as being full of most blessed condition). For, applying his philosophy to Desdemona, he says,
the wine she drinks is made of grapes,

meaning thereby that she is in no way different from other mortals, that she is subject to the same cravings for the things of the world and the same modes of satisfying them. She is therefore subject, like all others, to the same weaknesses, follies, frivolities and foul deeds. If she had really been of a superior character, intelligence and discernment, she would not then have committed the folly of marrying the Moor,—a foreigner, dark-complexioned and well-advanced in years—much against 'nature, country, credit, everything.' As Iago says,—

If she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor.

He is filled with contempt at the use of the word 'blessed' and so remarks,—'blessed pudding!'. And, if she has loved him, it was for the satisfaction of her lust. Now, however, since the Moor will have exhausted his already limited capacity of satisfying her cravings, she will discover the 'error of her choice.' Naturally, she will turn her attention to younger men. As Cassio, who is 'framed to make women false', has already gained her favour, she is deeply in love with him and has commenced her amorous play even in public. For, questions Iago,—

Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Iago here refers to the courteous reception which Cassio accorded to Desdemona on the sea-shore just as she landed. Roderigo also was present then in the company; but, though he too noticed the incident referred to by Iago, he did not see anything wrong, or out of the way, in it. So, when Iago asks if he has not marked that, Roderigo calmly replies,—

Yea, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago, however, is rather irritated at this objection of Roderigo. So, when Roderigo says that it was but 'Courtesy,' Iago retorts in anger that it is nothing but

Lechery, by this hand!—an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts.

Otherwise, they would not have done what they did. 'They met so near with their lips that their breaths embraced together.' These are the signs and marks, continues Iago, not of 'Courtesy,' but of 'Villainous thoughts.' And so, he informs his friend that these are—

Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! When these mutualities so marshal the way, hand at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion, pish!

But, Roderigo is evidently not convinced yet, and so once more tries to raise an objection and question the validity of Iago's arguments. Iago, however, will not allow him to speak. He puts him down by a menacing attitude,—

Sir, be you ruled by me: I have brought you from Venice.

Now, by way of digression, and also to divert Roderigo's mind from his obstinate mood and also to drag him into a particular course of action necessary for his (Iago's) own ends, Iago gives this order to Roderigo,—

Watch you to-night.

As for the authority of the order, says Iago,—'for the command, I'll lay't upon you.' And to encourage him to act up to his suggestion, he tells him,—

I'll not be far from you:

Now, while he is on the watch, Iago instructs him as follows,—

Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio (who) knows you not, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline, or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

And then, he says,

Sir, he is rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you:

And if he does, so much the better; but if he does not, then, somehow 'provoke him, that he may.' You must succeed in doing this much, and I will do the rest,—

Even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio.

And when once Cassio is thus dislodged, then Iago assures his friend,—'so shall you have a shorter journey to your desires; namely, the winning and enjoying of Desdemona, 'by the means I shall then have to prefer them.' And this will lead not only to Roderigo's profit, but to Iago's also. Here, however,

Iago has become a little careless, lets fall his mask and is caught napping, as it were, when he unconsciously blurts out his real intention,—

And the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectations of our prosperity.

No, after all, what he aims at is his own end, and not Roderigo's. He is more particular about it than anything else. That idea being uppermost in his mind, it naturally obtrudes itself without his being aware of it. Even persons of Iago's mighty intellect and supreme cunning and caution are subject at times to slipshods and oversights. Luckily, however, Roderigo does not notice it. He is more engrossed in his own thoughts and in the working out of the plan suggested by his friend. He is doubtful whether it will lead to any good at all, yet, he has not the courage to go against Iago's advice. Hence, he says,—

I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

But, Iago assures him that he can bring about the desired opportunity, and so, he says, 'I warrant thee.'

With this, their meeting comes to a close; and, while Iago proceeds to fetch Othello's necessities ashore, Roderigo bids him 'Adieu' and departs.

PART VII

Iago's Soliloquy, revealing his Vicious and Depraved Mentality.

Iago is now all for himself, and, as he is going to the harbour, he revolves within his mind what he has so far achieved and what he has yet to achieve. Prompted by his evil wishes, he resorts to a false and forced process of reasoning, in order to believe that Cassio loves Desdemona and that it is quite creditable that she too returns his love. As Iago says to himself,—

That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it;
That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit.

According to Iago, Cassio is of a loose conduct, or, as Iago has already described him— 'a fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife,' meaning his mistress, Bianca. Now that he has come across Desdemona; 'divine' and of angelic beauty, it is no wonder that he should cast his eyes on her. There is nothing improbable about it; and therefore Iago says, 'I do well believe it.'

Cassio, however has in reality no such impure or lewd thought about Desdemona. On the other hand, he has feelings of high regard and deep reverence for her. And though at times he is rather free in his manners, he is always courteous and respectful in his conduct towards her. He is open and absolutely innocent in his dealings with her.

But Iago, who is, in his evil nature, given to attach sinister motives even to the purest of things, sees something vile and vicious in Cassio's dealings with Desdemona. Because he has been keeping Bianca, so argues Iago, he is a slave to carnal cravings; because he 'hath a person and a smooth dispose', therefore, in the logic of Iago, he is 'framed to make women false'; and, lastly, because he behaves rather freely towards Desdemona, it cannot be anything else than that he 'loves' her. Therefore, 'I do well believe it', says Iago to himself.

Turning his thoughts to Desdemona, Iago concludes

'That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit.

Her love to Cassio, 'is apt' says Iago, nay, not only apt but quite credible,—'of great credit.' If the people will credit this assumption as probable and reasonable, then the wicked plans of Iago will be rendered easier to execute. The very naturalness and credibility of the thing will be of great advantage to him.

Iago puts an evil construction on Desdemona's marriage with the Moor. He takes an uncharitable view of this alliance by making it appear that Desdemona chose the Moor only to satisfy her carnal appetite brushing aside all other considerations. In this way he calumniates her character. While in reality she loved the Moor for his heroic and other good qualities, and married him to live with him and love him for ever; Iago, in his vicious nature, makes it out to Roderigo in a different light altogether. According to him, Love is only a scion of lust,—a mere Sensuality which forms the very blood of human nature. Therefore, if Desdemona has married the Moor for the sake of Love, it means, in the language of Iago, that she has done so for the satisfaction of her lust. If she had chosen him for that purpose in preference to others, it was because she felt herself attracted towards him by his 'bragging and telling her fantastical lies'. Even while they were in Venice, Iago suspected,—and even informed Roderigo to that effect,—that she had made a wrong choice. She would soon discover 'the error of her choice', and would, in consequence soon change for 'youth'. Now, when in Cyprus, seeing Cassio rather free with her, Iago takes advantage of this fact and thinks of concocting a vile story of illicit love out of it. It will serve Iago as a handle by which he will successfully abuse Othello's ear and poison his mind. Iago's one object throughout has been to wreak his vengeance on the Moor by spoiling his domestic peace and happiness. No other circumstance would serve the purpose so well as the tale of his wife's infidelity towards him. If only this tale is worked up, gradually, subtly and cleverly, so as to give it an appearance of truth, then, the passion of Jealousy, once awakened, will do its intended havoc. He knows the force and fury of this Passion which, when fully excited, will be satisfied with nothing short of the death of the person suspected.

Whether, however, he can succeed in his plan with such a story, whether he can successfully seduce Othello's ear and poison his mind against his wife, Iago entertains some doubt and fear. And the reason for his anxiety is thus explained,—

The Moor,—howbeit that I endure him not,—
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature;
And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona
A most dear husband.

It is this constancy of Othello's love for his wife and the depth and intensity of that love that fill Iago with misgivings. Added to these obstacles, the Moor is of a noble nature, given to construing men and measures liberally and large-heartedly. Can such a man ever be made to think evil of his wife? It looks a most formidable obstacle to Iago.

His base and perverse emotions are stirred up and kindled but before they are allowed to blaze up and consume him and others, Iago is looking for some show of reason, some extenuation. So, he concocts a preliminary tale of evil and injury to himself and the Moor. Already, while still in Venice, he first trotted out the rumour that Othello has spoiled the morality of his wife, Emilia. It was only a rumour but, by believing it to be true, he confirms the rumour and makes it look a fact. And now, taking this as a basis, he works himself into a mood of Jealousy, Anger and Hate against the Moor. This Hate, so originated, is easily fed and fanned by another unfortunate instinct,—the instinct of dislike for a stranger, for one of a different race, religion or country. It has ever been the habit of Iago, first to lay hold of some excuse floating about in the region of uncertainties, trifles, airy nothings; then to work upon and to magnify its importance, till it is crystallized into a formidable reason or motive for his malignity to issue in action. Accordingly, we see him taking up the rumour of Othello's misconduct with Emilia; and convincing himself that it is true, he makes it a motive for his action. As he himself puts it in his first soliloquy,—

.....I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not if't be true;
But I for mere suspicion in that kind
Will do as if for surety.

When Iago wishes to gain his evil ends, he will make any excuse or pretext serve as a reason to justify himself. What was only a mere rumour or suspicion about Emilia and the 'lusty' Moor, has now grown into a galling certainty, or as he says in his second soliloquy,—

For, that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof
Doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards,

Or, in other words, he makes that supposed event a cause to rouse his Jealousy with and to work that passion up to a high pitch. And, carried away by it, he now settles within himself as to what fit methods he should employ to seek his revenge. To use Iago's own words,—

And nothing can or shall content my soul
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife.

But how is he to be even'd with Othello in this respect? How should he spoil or taint the purity of Desdemona? By loving her? or by using artifice? But the first feeling must be reciprocated by her. Even illicit love must exist on both sides. As for himself, he says—

I do love her too (Desdemona.)

But for a person of Iago's philosophy, Love is but a lust of the human blood,—a sensuality, which if permitted freely, will lead one to 'preposterous conclusions' Therefore, a man not only of pure Intellect or Reason, but also sovereign Will-power, must either kill it; or, if compelled to cherish it, use it, not for its own sake but as a means only to gain some other end. And so, when he says that he loves Desdemona, he immediately follows it up by explaining,—

Not out of absolute lust ;.....
But partly led to diet my revenge.

There is, however, the probability that Iago may not succeed in his plan. Either he may not get access to Desdemona, or she may prove too strong-willed and too pure-minded for all his attempt or artifice to taint her conduct with Iago is not unmindful of these probabilities, therefore, aided by his quick intellect, he is ready with another alternative. As he says to himself,—

Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgment cannot cure.

If Iago cannot violate her chastity, he will at least destroy her happiness by filling her husband with a deep Jealousy and a deep hatred against her. Nothing will serve this end better than the story of her supposed love for and her secret misconduct with Cassio. Therefore thinks Iago,—

I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb.

But why should he pitch upon Cassio in particular, while there are others available for the purpose? There is a double reason for his decision. It is not only because Cassio has got the post of Lieutenantcy to which Iago was entitled, but also because Cassio is supposed to have misbehaved with his wife, Emilia;

For, I fear Cassio with my night-cap too.

So argues Iago within himself, concocting or believing another false and wicked story this time against Cassio, to justify himself in his object of ruining both Cassio and Othello, and thereby to satisfy his craving for vengeance against both.

Before, however, he can take 'Cassio on the hip' and 'abuse him to the Moor,' Iago must utilize or create some incident by which Cassio must incur the anger and displeasure of Othello. Cassio must be involved in some serious misbehaviour by which, he will not only lose the good opinion and the great confidence of the General, but most probably fall a victim to his wrath and be punished. It is only in such an atmosphere of strained relations between the two that Iago hopes to succeed in poisoning Othello's mind with the story of Cassio's misconduct with Desdemona.

How is Iago to bring about such a situation with regard to Cassio? By using Roderigo as his tool. He has already told the latter to go to the watch that night, and somehow provoke Cassio's temper so that he might beat him. Iago will be near enough, and exaggerate that small incident and the little confusion caused by it into a frenzied mutiny of the soldiers or of the people of Cyprus. This will attract the notice of Othello who, on finding the cause of it and the main culprit in it, will deal harshly with Cassio and form a bad opinion of him.

But, will Roderigo act up to Iago's direction? When a little while ago he told him so, he (Roderigo) appeared as if he was not convinced of the utility of the proposed step and even departed in a doubtful mind, by saying—

I will do this, if I can bring it to any opportunity.

This makes Iago doubtful whether Roderigo can at all be relied on. So, he says, rather in a doubtful manner,—

Which thing (I am) to do,
If this poor trash of Venice (Roderigo) whom I trash
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on.

What he means by this is—'In the furtherance of my plan, if only this simple fool of Venice whom I am inducing to act, apparently for his own gain, can act up to my suggestion', then,—

I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,
Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb.

And when so abused, the Moor will be put in a mood of jealousy, bewildered and perplexed, in which state, I, professing myself his friend and guide, will

Make the Moor thank me, love me and reward me
For making him egregiously an ass,
And practising upon his peace and quiet
Even to madness,

Iago has now weighed all his points, *pros and cons*, considered all his methods, and has come to a decision that he would either personally spoil Desdemona's chastity, or rouse Othello's jealousy and hate against her and ruin their happiness. But although the decision is formed, the details of his plan are yet hazy and problematic. He must give them time to take tangible shape, to materialize and mature. At present, they are in a confused state. Hence, he ends his soliloquy with these words,—

'Tis here (pointing to his head), but yet confused,
Knave's plain face is never seen till used.

PART VII.

The Herald goes about,—Proclaiming a Holiday.

The day, busy with the fresh arrivals and their welcomes in Cyprus, is now drawing to a close. It is nearly 5 P. M., when a Herald is sent out to proclaim, on the authority and consent of Othello, the 'noble and valiant General', a holiday 'from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven', as it is intended to have a public rejoicing over

certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the
Turkish fleet,

and also because,

besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his (Othello's)
nuptials.

The Herald, proclaiming the news in the streets, informs the people that

every man (as desired to) put himself into triumph; some to dance,
some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his
addiction leads him;

and adds that

all offices (public buildings) are open and there is full liberty of
feasting . . . till eleven o'clock of the night. So much was his
(Othello's) pleasure should be proclaimed.

And the Herald ends with the prayer,—

Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble General Othello.

PART VIII.

Othello asks Cassio to guard the Place well that Night and retires.

It is the night of Othello's arrival in Cyprus. Othello is in a hall of the Castle, and Desdemona and Cassio are with him, attended by servants.

Othello calls his friend and subordinate, Cassio, by his pet surname Michael, and asks him to arrange for the proper guarding of the place that night. To use his own words,—

Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night.

Othello gives this particular instruction because he thinks that the islanders have not yet fully recovered from the fear of an expected attack of the enemy, and from the damaging and depressing effects of a violent storm. They are still in low spirits; and he is afraid that some, out of despondency or desperation, may over-do their share in the feasting and get drunk. In their insobriety, they may provoke quarrels which might, in a panic-stricken state of the people, lead to more serious riots or affrays. Therefore, as a matter of special precaution, Othello appoints his own Lieutenant for the watch and, by way of advice and warning, tells him,—

Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to out-sport discretion.

Cassio in reply states that he has already settled things with Iago for the proper guarding of the place, and that he has given him suitable instructions about it. Yet, he too will see to the arrangements personally and satisfy himself that his orders are carried out. He says,—

Iago hath direction what to do ;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.

'Iago is most honest,' says Othello and approves of Cassio's arrangements. Then, he bids 'good night' to Cassio and asks him to meet him early next morning, as he desires to speak to him concerning some important affair. Turning now to Desdemona, he lovingly tells her,

..... Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue .
That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you ;

meaning thereby that, having mutually loved each other and married, they shall henceforth enjoy the blissful course and comfort of a wedded life.

PART IX.

Iago Indirectly holds out the Alluring Bait of Woman to Cassio, but in Vain.

Soon after, Cassio meets Iago and, after the usual greeting, tells him that both of them should proceed and look to the proper 'watch' of the night.

Iago, however, has already settled within himself that he should bring about the fall of Cassio that night. So, in a friendly tone and manner, he now tells him that it is not yet the hour for watch. The public feastings and rejoicings are to continue till eleven o'clock when, he says, they can attend to their duty. In Iago's own words .—

Not this hour, Lieutenant ; ' tis not yet ten o' the clock.

If so early (as 10 P. M.) they were sent away by Othello, it was not so much for their attending to the watch as it was for himself, to snatch an early hour and begin his amorous play with his wife. It was the night of his nuptials, and naturally enough, he was anxious to have a quiet and happy time with her. To use the rather blunt and inelegant words of Iago,—

Our general cast us thus early for the love of his Desdemona; who let us not therefore blame: he hath not yet made wanton the night with her.

Then, to divert Cassio's mind from the idea of proceeding to the watch, and to lure or entice him into the temptations of enjoying wine and woman, he now changes the topic of conversation and dwells upon the accomplishments of Desdemona. And so, in his light-hearted and vulgar language, he remarks—

She is sport for Jove.

But Cassio, who is absolutely unaware of the evil intentions of his friend, takes him to be sincere, though plain and blunt, and on his part adds his own appreciation and praise of that lady's good qualities by saying,—

She's a most exquisite lady.

He means by this that she is in every way an accomplished lady,—as admirable in the qualities of her head and heart as in the beauty of her person. But Iago, who by nature has an evil mind and a nose for stench only, gives a vulgar turn to Cassio's chaste and pure notions of the lady, by describing her as cunning enough to make amorous advances to others. When, therefore, Cassio says that she is a most exquisite lady, Iago quickly follows with the coarse remark,—

I'll warrant her full of game.

Cassio, on the other hand, to whom the gross and vulgar import of Iago's words does not appeal, or who in his purity of heart is unable to see the venom underlying his words, simply says,—

Indeed, she's a most fresh and delicate creature.

But Iago becomes still more blunt and enters upon a detailed description of the lady in a language suggestive of nothing but lewd and voluptuous thoughts—

What an eye she has! methinks it sounds a parley to provocation.

His meaning is, that her eyes are so alluring in their sensuality that they will attract any heart to her loving and lustful bosom. But Cassio retorts by the observation,—‘true, she has an inviting eye,’ meaning thereby, ‘brilliant and charming eyes’ which are—

Yet, methinks, right modest.

Iago, however, would not stop, and this time puts a direct question to Cassio and asks him,—

And when she speaks, is it not an alarm to love?

By this, he implies that her voice is so musical, her speech so attractive as to cause every one that listens to her, to love her (carnally) at once. But Cassio merely states,—

She is indeed perfection !

That is, she is perfect in her graces and attainments,—richly endowed by Nature in the former, and well accomplished by Art and Education in the latter.

Iago, in the course of this conversation, shows what a coarse-minded, foul-mouthed, lecherous beast, or a cunning Satan he is. With a wicked intention, but hiding it cleverly so as to make it look like an innocent joke between friends, he is really trying to place a temptation in Cassio's path. Beginning with what looks like a friendly justification of Othello for sending them away so early, he gradually digresses into a description of Desdemona's alluring beauty of person and her charming ways which, he says, are fit even for the gods to desire. He gives so glorious a picture of her and dwells so seductively upon the beauty of her eye and voice as to excite the carnal feelings and desires of Cassio towards her. His main object is to draw Cassio on to commit himself by word or gesture to indicate his passion for Desdemona. Any such expression of opinion by him, however slight or indirect, Iago would gladly welcome and use against him and the lady to their ruination.

It must, however, be said to the credit of Cassio that he is too pure-minded to fall into the snare set up by his friend for his downfall. In fact, he is not aware that his friend has been all along designing against him and therefore, when that friend has been dilating upon the beauty of the Lady rather vulgarly, he has merely taken him for a rugged but plain-spoken person. Consequently, he does not resent or protest against his friend's words. He takes him to be rugged and honest and, so, contents himself by adding his own laudatory and respectful remarks about the lady in answer to his friend's indecent implications. According to Cassio, the lady is 'most exquisite'; 'most fresh and delicate'; has 'an inviting eye' that is yet 'right modest'; and, on the whole, 'is indeed perfection'. Being quite pure-minded and sincere in his admiration for her, he neither feels nor takes the lure or bait held out to him by his friend.

Iago, the tempter, knowing this, now turns to another channel of allurement and at last succeeds in gradually drawing Cassio into his net. But before he changes this subject for another, he now adopts quite a different tone in order to allay any suspicion he may have excited in Cassio against the purity of the lady's character. Therefore, he now ends the topic with the skill of a finished hypocrite with good wishes for the married couple, in his inimitable blunt language—

Well, happiness to their sheets !

PART X

If one Bait is refused, another is offered and taken: Cassio at first Resists,
but at last Succumbs to the offer of Wine.

Having failed to tempt Cassio by the alluring bait of Woman, Iago now tries him by another, namely, Wine, saying,—

Come, Lieutenant, I have a stoup of Wine;

so that, 'we may drink to each other's health and to the health and happiness of the married couple' And to make the offer all the more acceptable and agreeable, he adds,—

And here, without, are a brace of Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello.

Here, close by, he points to a couple of persons who are, as he calls them, 'gallants',—men of noble birth and breeding,—men not given to mean practices or vulgar excesses and, therefore, men whose friendship is worth cultivating. To refuse their offer or to reject their company at such a time, would be to violate good manners or the established usage of social entertainment. After all, they are not drunkards by habit, and, if they have consented to take wine now, it is a small quantity or 'a measure' only. Besides, they will drink, not to satisfy their craving, but to the health of Othello, their general. This is a recognized form of expressing one's love and loyalty and, on this occasion, it is a duty also, 'as Othello is not only our General, but also our Governor, in supreme command over all in Cyprus.' Under the circumstances, Cassio should not refuse the offer now made to him.

Thus, in the name of Friendship, in the name of social Morality or Etiquette, and for the sake of Love, Loyalty and Duty, does the Devil Iago tempt the unsuspecting Cassio to one cup of wine, to one only,—one cup that is to be the cup of bitterness, of sorrow and shame, of failure and downfall, to him that drinks. Such a cup is full of all the hellish ingredients of Jealousy, Hate, Anger and Revenge to some, and of Pain, Anxiety and Worry to others. In short, it is a cup of deadly poison that will eventually lead to or culminate in the most pathetic, undeserving, and appalling death of several innocent lives.

Cassio, however, at first resists the temptation, and refuses the offer in these words—

Not to-night, good Iago.

and for this reason,—

I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking.

He knows that he is unable to bear the effects of wine, and that, like him, there must be many others who are constitutionally unfit to stand it. Therefore, in his hate or dislike of this well-and-

widely-established social habit of 'drinking' as a mode of courtesy or hospitality or as a 'custom of entertainment,' he sighs and wishes—

I could well wish Courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago brings his friendly pressure to bear on Cassio with such warmth, earnestness and show of reason that his victim at last yields to his persuasion and falls into his net. His seducer has these coaxing words—

O, they are our friends, but one cup; I'll drink for you.

Among the reasons urged, we note the following —the persons that have come are friends, 'gallants,' noblemen of high birth and breeding, the quantity of wine to be taken is only one cup; and if Cassio still objects to take 'but one cup,' Iago, his friend will drink it for him, on his behalf, it is only at a jovial meeting of friends and not at a drinking saloon or tavern, and the friends are all select, of a sober class, not drunkards, and, above all, he (Iago) would be there, and will not allow any excess to mar the otherwise innocent, simple, festive joy of the hour. But Cassio feels that this proposed, restricted, single cup will be too much for him, since he has already taken one cup elsewhere which, he says, was rather strong, or only slightly diluted,—

I have drunk but one cup to-night,

And that was craftily qualified too,

And, behold, what innovation it makes here, (pointing to his head).

He means that even that one cup is having its evil intoxicating effect on him, and that he is naturally too weak to stand much wine; to use his apologetic language,—

I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

The tempter, however, will not leave him alone. In a most friendly manner, almost in a tone of supplication, and with all his powers of persuasion and cajolery, he once more appeals to him in the name of the jolly, festive nature of the occasion and asks him to please his friends by taking only a little measure,—

What, man! 'tis a night of revels: the gallants desire it.

He again reminds Cassio that it is a night of feasting and jollity; that every one, having been given full liberty, is indulging in some form of pleasure or merry-making; that therefore Cassio will not be committing any breach of duty, by taking but one cup with his friends; and that, after all, it is only a simple innocent pleasure that is desired by the 'gallants' or men of high standing. Is he going to refuse them that small enjoyment, particularly when they themselves have come seeking for his company? Will he, who has been well-known for his refined manners, obliging disposition, agreeable ways of pleasing and entertaining friends,

this occasion become so rude, disagreeable and disobliging to them ? Will he not thereby be spoiling his fair name for a gentleman of agreeable and obliging disposition ? Therefore, says Iago, as if very keen about preserving the good name of his friend.—

What, man !.....the gallants desire it.

This is too much even for an abstaining saint Cassio's personal vanity has been tickled, his sense of good manners touched, and his polite, hospitable and obliging disposition praised ; how can he refuse the tempting offer of the proverbial spider to 'walk into my parlour ?' The victim who has already twice refused it, now, on the third occasion, yields to it. Whatever else may be his plea for refusing the drink, he does not desire to be known or regarded as disagreeable and rude to his new friends. His good name is at stake. Therefore, to the secret joy of the tempter, but as a prelude to his own downfall, he takes the first step on the road to his ruin when he enquires—

Where are they ?

His enquiry refers to those gallants or noblemen who have come seeking his company. To this question of Cassio, Iago joyfully and readily replies,—

Here, at the door ; I pray you, call them in.

Cassio need not take the trouble of going a long way to look for them. They have themselves come and are waiting at his door ; he is only to call them in ; and they will be pleased. So, Cassio now consents,—

'I'll do it, (i. e. call them in)

And yet he makes a last, mild protest which, however, he cannot enforce.

But it dislikes me.

In uttering this mild protest after giving his consent, we can well imagine a certain amount of pathos in his voice, a feeling of helplessness. He knows by bitter experience in the past that he should not drink ; and yet he is made to feel that he should accept, and not refuse the offer of a little drink on this occasion. His experience reminds him of his position as an honored and refined member of society. The latter needs a greater consideration than the former, in as much as the demands of society are of greater importance than the personal tastes of an individual. Personal desires and tastes, personal likes and dislikes, should give way before the requirements of society. Such is the accepted view of the work-a-day life in our society in all its departments,—political, military, religious, educational, caste, or social. Cassio is an honorable member of such a society,—how can he shut the door against its fashions, conventions, or demands ?

PART XI.

Iago's Soliloquy on the situation.

Just as Cassio has left the room to call in his friends or gallants, Iago begins his soliloquy, giving utterance to the thoughts and plans suiging in his brain. He is a very skilful designer. At every stage, he carefully weighs and scrutinises his *modus operandi*, even as a thief or burglar does when he, in a dark night, breaks into a house to commit burglary. We can well imagine how the burglar looks around, proceeds silently, slowly and cautiously, full of forethought and precautions. Iago works with similar caution, cunning and forethought. He is conscious that he has succeeded so far in inducing Cassio to consent to entertain the gallants whom he has gone out to summon. And now he thinks that if he can further succeed in tempting him to drink but one cup more than the one he has already taken, he is sure, in view of Cassio's 'infirmity,' that it will make him quite 'drunk', upset his brain and nerves, and render him very talkative, quarrelsome and offensive. He is somewhat doubtful if Cassio will take another cup. The question is still problematic and hence the conditional clause with which his soliloquy begins. Once this condition is fulfilled, the foreseen result must follow. To use Iago's expressive phraseology,—

If I can fasten but one cup upon him,
With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
As my young mistress' dog.

And when he is in that drunken state, he will behave like a young puppy that is easily teased into barking and biting; that is to say, he will be readily provoked to quarrel with and assault any one who angers him or comes in his way. There is his fool Roderigo who can be employed for this purpose. There are two causes which have operated to unsettle Roderigo's poor brains; one is, his love or infatuation for Desdemona, which has made him quite silly and blind; or, as Iago puts it, he is one—

Whom Love has turned almost the wrong side out.

This fool has been deluded into the belief that once Cassio is removed from his post, he will have easier access to Desdemona, and so he is willing to act in any manner that will lead to Cassio's fall. Another reason that has made this fool more silly is his present insobriety, caused by his repeated and copious draughts of wine, drunk to the health of his lady-love Desdemona. In this excited or unsettled state, the gull can be easily induced to follow any path, however idiotic or dangerous, provided it is made to appear profitable to him. Iago knows that this drunken fool is set to 'watch to-night,' and what can be easier than to set him on to anger and quarrel with Cassio? Iago knows him and his

weaknesses thoroughly. He calls him, 'my sick fool, Roderigo,' who—

To Desdemona hath to-night caroused
Potations pottle-deep ; and he's to watch :

But Iago must have, in his forethought, others also to fall back upon. As the proverb goes, 'he must have double strings to his bow'. If 'my sick fool' proves timid and fails, he has other drunkards who can be used for the success of his scheme,—

Three lads of Cyprus, —noble swelling spirits,
That hold their honours in a wary distance,
The very elements of this warlike isle,—
Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups ,
And they watch too.

What a clever and consummate devil! Note his superb cunning and diplomacy with which he has collected a number of raw, hot-headed, excitable youths,—'swelling spirits, the very elements of this warlike isle,'—at his place and, on the pretext of celebrating the festive occasion, has made them drunk or 'flustered with flowing cups' They are youths of noble birth and high spirits, and are rather touchy about their personal honor and family dignity and, as such, they will not tamely put up with anything said or done against them. He knows full well that they will presently be set to watch, to keep guard, that night in that war-like Island; and that, therefore, they should not be under the influence of liquor or any intoxicating drug. And yet, he has 'flustered them all with flowing cups' in furtherance of his dark and diabolical scheme. For, only when that scheme has been successfully achieved, will his malignant nature,—his evil emotions or agitations of his mind,—be quieted and satisfied. And, hence, he triumphantly anticipates the downfall of Cassio by embroiling him with Roderigo or with the other gallant lads of Cyprus, all more or less drunk,—

.....Now, 'mongst this flock of drunkards,
Am I to put our Cassio in some action
That may offend the isle.

Here, at this juncture, Iago, seeing Cassio return with Montano and the 'gallants', brings his soliloquy to a close by remarking that if his efforts and plans will lead to the result now thought of by him, he would be highly satisfied. If only this preliminary plan of his, in first intoxicating and then embroiling Cassio, were to succeed, then the success of his bigger scheme of wreaking vengeance on Othello will be simplified and ensured. And, meditating thus, he brings his soliloquy to a close—

If consequence do but approve my dream,
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

PART XII

Effects of Drink on Cassio,

In the company of the 'gallants,' elated by the lively talk of his companions, and specially pressed and persuaded by Montano (the Ex-Governor of the Island), Cassio is now inclined to drink. At first, he hesitates and gives out this excuse, —

'Fore God, they have given me a ouse already.

But Montano interposes, saying,—

Good faith, a little one ! not past a pint,.....

Whereupon Iago, the tempter, from behind, watching his opportunity, shouts out to the boys—

Some wine, ho !

and starts singing, loudly and in a hilarious manner, the song ending with the moral,—

And let me the canakin clink, clink ;
And let me the canakin clink ,
A soldier's a man ;
A life's but a span ;
Why, then, let a soldier drink.

And when the song is finished, Cassio already elated, now bursts out with the praise—

'Fore God, an excellent song !

Iago informs the company that he learned that song in England where, indeed, they are so manly as to drink a lot and yet remain steady, without appearing to be 'drunk.' He compares them with the other peoples of Europe and gives Englishmen the palm for *drinking*. He is trying to tickle Cassio's vanity, by reminding him of the manly aptitude of other peoples for drink and suggesting that the Italians or Venetians should not fare worse in comparison. How often is one's vanity touched by friends or companions who boast of their abilities to do certain feats and who thereby shame or encourage the more timid of the company into doing the same. Cassio is likewise ensnared and tickled, and so he asks his tempter —

Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking ?

and straightaway starts drinking himself, as if not to be out-done by others. Shakespeare here means to cast a veiled slur on the national vice of *drink* so rampant among the Europeans, particularly the English, so far back as the 16th and 17th centuries. This pernicious vice is still so prevalent that America has made penal laws and organized a campaign to combat it. Cassio now drinks and calls out,—

(Here's) to the health of the general !

Iago then treats the jolly company to another song, the first part of which is quite silly and stale, both in spirit and substance. But, it is sung well by Iago among 'a flock of drunkards' and is praised by Cassio and others as 'a more exquisite song than the other.' The second part of the song, however, contains a moral at its close, which seems to have been lost upon the drunkards *viz.*—

'Tis pride that pulls the country down ;
Then take thine auld cloak about thee

Cassio is now completely 'gone' in drink, and begins to talk stupidly, incoherently and effusively about everything he thinks of. He is quite intoxicated, but, staggering as a drunkard, protests that he is not drunk and comes out with this meaningless drivel,—

Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk ; this is my Ancient ;
this is my right hand, and this is my left I am not drunk now :
I can stand well enough, and speak well enough.

Overpowered by drink,—intoxicated, reeling and rambling,—he now goes out of the room. Turning now to Roderigo who just appears on the scene, he sets him on to go after Cassio—

I pray you, after the Lieutenant ; go.

As soon as they are gone, Iago condemns Cassio's drunkenness to Montano and others, and makes this sardonic comment—

You see *this fellow* that is gone before ?
He is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar
And give direction, and do but see his vice.

Then he dilates on Cassio's vice or vicious habit of drinking and remarks that this vice overshadows all his other virtues or good qualifications as a soldier,—

. . . And do but see his vice ;
'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other.

This is followed by his hypocritical expressions of pity and fear,—pity for Cassio that he is given to 'drink,' and fear that Othello's trust in drunken Cassio might endanger the safety of the island. Montano, on hearing all this, naturally enquires if he is often thus, and suggests to Iago that the good and unsuspecting General should be informed of Cassio's weakness,—

.....It were well
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps he sees it not, or his good nature
Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio
And looks not on his evils :

After thus commenting on the good nature of Othello, Montano asks his friend Iago,—'Is not this true ?' Then he gives expression to his feelings of pity, fear and anxiety thus—

And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity :

Montano, in all sincerity, throws out the suggestion that 'it were an honest action to say so to the Moor.' But Iago, artfully keeping up the pretence of friendship and love for Cassio before Montano, looks almost indignant and horrified, and says—

Not I, for this fair island;
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of this evil :

While Iago is thus engaged in conversation with Montano and the 'gallants,' they suddenly hear the noise of brawling outside and a cry of—'help ! help !' This is followed by the appearance of Cassio. He is angry and turbulent, and is driving Roderigo before him, calling him names,—'You rogue ! you rascal !.....a knave (to) teach me my duty !' and beating him. Seeing this, Montano interposes and stops Cassio by holding him, but the latter is unmanageable and fights the interposer with his sword. While this tumult is going on, Iago instructs Roderigo to go out and cry—a 'mutiny,' and ring the alarum bell. At the same time, he pretends anxiety to quell the disturbance, by shouting to each of the combatants ; by loudly questioning 'who's that that rings the bell ?' ; and by expressing his fears that 'the town will rise.'

PART XIV.

OTHELLO APPEARS ON THE SCENE OF AFFRAY AND DISMISSES CASSIO.

(a) Iago's feigned activity in restoring 'peace and order'
ruffled by himself.

Hearing the tumult and the alarum-bell ringing, Othello immediately arrives on the scene and asks the people to stop fighting. Iago also shows to be very busy before the general, pretending to help in restoring peace and order. Here, again, we see proofs of his consummate cunning and hypocrisy. It is he who has carefully planned all this mischief. It is he who has asked Roderigo to raise a hue and cry, to go and shout—a 'mutiny', and to ring the alarum bell; and yet he, now professing himself a friend of peace, in all innocence, exclaims,—

Who's that that rings the bell ? Diablo, ho !
The town will rise . God's will, Lieutenant, hold !
You will be shamed for ever.

Othello, seeing Montano and Cassio at arms, commands on pain of death—

Hold, for your lives !

And Iago, the dissembler, now *looks* all sense of duty and diligence in the presence of the general and shouts out,—

Hold, ho ! Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—gentlemen,—
 Have you forgot all sense of place and duty ?
 Hold ! the General speaks to you ; hold, hold, for shame !

This is an ingenious manœuvre on the part of Iago, by which he appears quite honest and innocent before Othello in order to further strengthen the already implicit confidence of the General in him. Othello condemns the conduct of Montano and Cassio as worse than that of the Turks and, in anger, scolds and threatens thus—

For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl ;
 He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
 Holds his soul light ; he dies upon his motion,

He means by this that 'he, who continues or prolongs the affray to satisfy his personal spite, shall court his own death, i.e.,—shall be killed at once by me'. This threat has its desired effect in stopping the fight forthwith. The General then gives directions to 'silence that dreadful bell, (as) it frights the isle from her propriety.' Turning to Iago who looks so very sad and dejected, he asks him the cause of this broil,—

Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
 Speak, who began this ? On thy love, I charge thee.

Being a pretender and master-actor, Iago deceives all. Before Othello, Iago puts on the appearance of innocence and honesty, not only by his artful words and expressions, but also by his looks, acts and gestures. His genius for hypocrisy helps him to adjust his physiognomy so skilfully that he appears greatly grieved and perturbed at the incident. In fact, 'Grief' is written, as it were, on his face. Neither Othello, nor Cassio, nor Montano, can read Iago's devilish heart, so cleverly hid by his made-up exterior. The real Iago, the deadly viper, lies serenely screened from the view of all. Othello is therefore completely deceived when he relies upon Iago and questions him about the matter, calling him 'honest Iago' and charging him on his love to disclose the name of the offender who began this brawl.

Here, note the fidelity of Shakespeare's plot to the stern realities and happenings of daily life. It illustrates how in this world persons unwittingly bring about their own ruin, either by their inability or by their indifference, to correctly judge the character and intentions of their neighbours, friends or associates. Shakespeare always holds the mirror up to Nature. Every one acts according to one's inborn nature. The Moor is open, generous and trustful as before. Iago is ever the same hypocrite, double-dealer and dissembler. Our sympathy goes out in full measure to Othello, the unsuspecting Moor, who fails to see through Iago's heart.

(b) Iago's pretended ignorance of the cause of the brawl.

Iago with consummate hypocrisy says, in reply to Othello's question about the cause of the 'brawl,' that he does not know anything about its origin, that he was himself taken by surprise, that Cassio and Montano were like friends but till then; and that they began fighting all of a sudden. As expressed by him,—

I do not know. friends all but now, even now,
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
Divesting them for bed; and then, but now,
As if some planet had unwitting men,
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I can not speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds.

He then artfully regrets his presence at the scene of the brawl, by saying,—

(I) would, in action glorious I had lost
Those legs that brought me to a part of it.

By this, he means that he wished he had rather gone to a regular battle and lost his legs in some 'glorious action' than to have come there and witnessed that base and contemptible 'brawl.'

(c) Othello questions Cassio and Montano but in vain.

Othello, then turning to Cassio, asks—

How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?

Note the endearing way in which the Moor addresses Cassio, indicating his sincere love and regard for his Lieutenant. The General wonders how Cassio could have so forgotten himself as to take part in this brawl. Cassio pleads inability to speak. Poor man, he is dazed out of his wits on account of the demoralizing effects of wine. He is taken aback and is unable to reply,—

I pray you, pardon me, I cannot speak.

Othello then turns to Montano, expressing his wonder that the Governor of Cyprus, greatly noted for his steadiness and wisdom, should have stooped so low as to become 'a night brawler' and thus sullied his hitherto splendid reputation. He therefore asks him to explain the cause of the brawl,—

Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure; what's the matter,
That you unlace your reputation thus,
And spend your rich opinion for the name
Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it,

When Othello thus asks Montano about the cause of the quarrel, the latter is so seriously 'hurt to danger' and possibly feels so faint and exhausted from the loss of blood from his wound, and also depressed by the insult and injustice done to him, that he finds it hard to reply and refers him to Iago, saying—

Your officer, Iago, can inform you—
While I spare speech, which something now offends me—
Of all that I do know:

Though he is unable to give a full description of the incident, yet he cannot rest content without briefly, but tenderly touching upon *his* part in the quarrel by way of self-vindication. He is deeply and bitterly conscious of the wrong and injury done to him. He thinks it inadvisable on grounds of delicacy to plead his own cause, and implores Iago, almost cites him as his own witness to tell the general all that he (Montano) knows. He puts in a word to say that he is conscious of having done nothing amiss except to act in self-defence when assaulted by others. His action in self-defence cannot be considered a sin or a crime. For, Nature has planted that instinct not only in man but in all life,—to save oneself against foreign aggression or assault. As Montano says,—

.....Nor know I aught
By me that's said or done amiss this night ;
Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,
And to defend ourselves (it) be a sin
When violence assails us.

(d) Othello gets angry when the explanation asked for, is withheld.

Othello, in his strong sense of discipline and duty, is anxious to get at the root of the brawl and to duly punish the delinquent. But, finding that the two Principal combatants or culprits refuse to explain the origin of it and disclose the chief offender who began it, he naturally gets very angry and annoyed. So he comes out with this threat,—

.....Now, by heaven,
My blood begins my safer guides to rule,
And passion, having my best judgment collied,
Assays to lead the way: If I once stir,
Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
Shall sink in my rebuke.

Therefore, he wants to know how the fight began and who began it,—

.....Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on?

In his strict and high sense of Right, Duty and Propriety, Othello is unable to conceive how such a wicked quarrel could

have occurred in a town of war which is yet unsettled, and that too—

On the Court and guard of safety.

The very idea of such a happening is galling and horrible to him, and he is naturally impatient to learn 'how this rout began.' The more he thinks about it, and the longer the explanation demanded is postponed or withheld, the greater swells his fury. The tension of his emotions and the stern voice of duty in him, therefore, prompt him to exclaim—

And he that is approved in this offence,
Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me.

He is a man with whom Duty is Religion and Religion is Duty, and every other feeling or consideration is subordinate to it. Quite naturally, therefore, he says that the man who is proved to be responsible for this brawl, though he be his own brother, nay, his twin brother, will be disowned and discarded by him before the 'altar of Duty'. In such an agitated mood, Othello finds himself at a loss for words to stigmatize the conduct of the brawlers. Fully disgusted, he turns to Iago with this comment and question,—

'Tis —*monstrous*. Iago, who began't?

(e) Iago is asked to explain, but he feigns reluctance.

Before he could begin his reply to the General, Montano charges Iago, in the name of his profession as a soldier, to tell the truth and give an impartial account of the incident. He asks him to set aside the consideration that both of them (Iago and Cassio) are friends and comrades in profession or service. Montano fears that Iago in his friendship for Cassio may not speak the whole truth and so he warns him—

If partially affined, or leagued in office,
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago has appeared most reluctant, and has purposely waited till forced, as it were, to disclose the truth, so damaging to Cassio, tho' at heart he is most eager and willing to give it out. He now adopts another artful move before beginning his reply to the Moor, namely an ingenious preface to his explanation to make it appear to the General that there is nothing but the best of good feeling and love between Iago and Cassio. And now that he is called upon to disclose the truth, he says in reply to the exhortation of Montano,—

Touch me not so near.

By this, he means to say,—'Do not corner me thus, by striking me in my weak point, i.e.—my honor as a true soldier, and my

love and friendship towards Cassio.' With this expression of feigned resentment at Montano's advice or warning, Iago comes out craftily with this foreword that he would rather lose his tongue than use it against Cassio.—

I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio.

By this well-timed and masterly preface, Iago, the pretender, makes out that he feels sorry to say or do anything that will go against Cassio. And, yet, he adds—

Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him.

Note the artful import of Iago's self-persuasion that the truth, he is now forced to disclose, will not be damaging to Cassio. With an expression of a pious belief in Cassio's innocence, Iago brings out his friend's complicity in the crime with far greater emphasis than if given out in plain and direct words without the qualifying 'Buts' and 'Yets.' There is the hand of the consummate hypocrite again!

(f) Iago's explanation, so innocent-looking and yet so incriminating

With these prefatory remarks, Iago turns to Othello and explains the cause of the quarrel —When himself and Montano were talking with each other, a fellow came out, crying for help, pursued by Cassio with "determined sword to execute upon him", that is to say, with a firm determination to strike or cut him with the sword. Here, observe the forcible significance of the word "determined." It gives the idea that Cassio would not be curbed and was firmly bent upon striking. By such deliberately chosen words, the cunning devil seeks to establish Cassio's crime beyond all doubt. "He strikes without making it known that he strikes." Then, he proceeds, he went out after the 'fellow crying out for help' to stop him, lest he should go and raise an alarm in the town which was already full of the fears of war. Montano, having met the enraged Cassio (striking the other fellow), requested him to stop. We see how the dissembling wretch shapes his explanation and presents it in such a plausible fashion that nobody will, for a moment, doubt his statement. At every stage of his explanation he ingeniously impresses his friends, not only with his own innocence in the affray, but with his anxiety and strenuous efforts to avert it. Failing to overcome the other fellow who was too quick for him, he returned to the place where he had left Montano and Cassio, as he heard—

.... the clunk and fall of swords
And Cassio high in oath; which, till to-night,
I ne'er might say before.

In addition to Iago's previous damaging remark, that Cassio pursued with a 'determined sword,' he now comes out with

another,—equally, if not more incriminating,—that he found the Lieutenant swearing aloud with anger and plying his sword in a fashion which he has never before seen him do. The explanation of the hypocrite seriously implies that Cassio is the culprit, tho' it does not say so directly in so many words. The eager and artless Othello is naturally carried away by Iago's seemingly honest statement of facts and is filled with wrath against Cassio, the wrong-doer. Iago has practically said all that is required to establish the guilt of Cassio in Othello's mind. He then goes on to describe the further stages of the quarrel. On his return from the vain pursuit of the fellow who had cried out for help, he found both Montano and Cassio engaged in a personal grapple, dealing blows and, in fact, in the same position as Othello himself found them. He winds up with—

More of this matter cannot I report :

as if anything more is still left to be reported. Not content with thus incriminating Cassio, the sly devil now makes a pretence of pleading for the Lieutenant's cause but, in reality, he is further driving home the conviction of Cassio's guilt. Iago now purposely adopts a palliative, almost a philosophising, tone, and says that though Cassio might have done some wrong to Montano, yet, after all, to err is human ; even the best of men at times act hastily and improperly under the influence of anger and strike even their nearest and dearest well-wishers. In his own words, so artful and yet so full of wisdom and truth,—

But men are men: the best sometimes forget

As men in rage strike those that wish them best.

Then he throws out a feeble surmise that, probably, Cassio had suffered at the hands of the 'fellow who cried out for help,' an insult or indignity which he could not stand in spite of all his patience; and that this, perhaps, accounts for and partly justifies his loss of temper which caused the quarrel that night,—

Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received

From him that fled, some strange indignity,

Which patience could not pass.

Look at the dexterous use of Reasoning, fallacious though, and at the power of Indirect Suggestion, by which he has fixed the crime firmly on Cassio's head. He says that people will, under the baleful influence of anger, strike even their dearest well-wishers, and that Cassio, overpowered by such passion that night, has done the same. How clearly he makes it naturally follow that Cassio is the angry striker, and the man struck, Montano, the well-wisher. We note the syllogism, in which he gives out the valid premises and leaves the inevitable conclusion to follow by itself. In this way, the hypocrite works on the unsuspecting mind of Othello and convinces him of Iago's own innocence and of Cassio's complicity in the night-brawl.

(g) Othello believes Iago and dismisses Cassio.

Boundless in his confidence in those he loves, and artless by nature, the Moor takes Iago's pretended solicitude for Cassio to be genuine; and so he fails to detect the imposture and deceit underlying the words of the double-dealer. We see this deception reaching its crowning point when Othello expresses his settled opinion—

. I know, Iago,
Thy honesty and love doth mine this matter
Making it light to Cassio....

With these words, Othello—the strict disciplinarian and the votary of the Goddess of Duty—as ardent in his affection as he is inflexible in his resolution,—gives out his sharp decision,—

. Cassio, I love thee;
But never more be officer of mine.

By which he means to say, 'as a private friend I love you, but I sever all my official connection with you' Burning with rage, he even goes further and says, 'I'll make thee an example.'

PART XV.

Desdemona also comes up and joins Othello.

In the meantime, Desdemona, also roused from her sleep, comes and asks Othello what is amiss. He, in his exceeding love for his wife, does not wish to worry her with the news of the trouble, and so he tells her there is nothing serious or unusual about it, and that, in the life of a soldier, it is but a common thing to be disturbed in his sleep,—

Come, Desdemona: 'tis the soldiers' life
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

But before he retires, he attends to Montano and addresses him a few encouraging words,—

Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon:

Turning to his attendants, he tells them to 'lead him off.' Next, looking at Iago, he instructs him to pacify the town, distracted by this brawl,—

Iago, look with care about the town,
And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted

After giving these instructions and seeing Montano led off, Othello departs from the scene with Desdemona.

PART XVI.

Cassio, reflecting on Drink and Reputation, becomes remorseful and dejected. Iago's artful palliation and offer of advice which appears good but is really wicked.

Iago and Cassio are now left alone. The former, as if knowing nothing of Cassio's state of mind, now wonderingly enquires of him 'if he is hurt,' with all the pretended tenderness of a well-

wisher. Cassio answers, he is hurt 'past all surgery', meaning figuratively that he is hurt, or injured in his moral character beyond all redemption. Iago, feigning ignorance of Cassio's meaning, takes his answer literally and exclaims 'Heaven forbid' that he should be so much hurt (physically).

Cassio, unable to control himself, now bursts out in self-reproach, in an agony of despair lamenting the loss of his reputation to Iago thus,—

O, I have lost my reputation ;
I have lost the immortal part of myself,
And what remains is bestial.

Cassio means to say that he has suffered the pangs of a moral death, for, he knows that character is the most valuable part of a man and one that distinguishes him from the beast, and that, therefore when his good name or character is lost, the best part of him is lost; that is to say, with loss of character, a man ceases to be a *man* and descends to the level of a *beast*. With such reflections, poor Cassio is repenting over his misconduct, brought on by wine, and grieving at the loss of Othello's good opinion of him.

Iago, in his usual dissembling and cynical manner, replies that 'as an honest man' he had taken Cassio's words literally, and thought that he was *wounded*, and that his bodily wound was really a matter for some concern and careful attention. In his opinion, a 'bodily wound' will be, and should be, more keenly felt than the loss of so-called reputation, which is only an undefined abstract thing, a 'most false imposition', not existing in the practical world. Iago is, by nature, devoid of finer feelings, incapable of appreciating anything good. He always views things through a crooked angle of vision or perverted mentality. He, therefore, despises Cassio's lament and remorse, and says that reputation is only a 'false imposition'—put on by men, just as they put on appearances, and that it is often easily got by one without any real merit, and is as easily lost without deserving. With this, he indulges in a joke and pun—"you have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser."

Then, seemingly to cheer up and solace his friend, Iago shows him a way to retrieve his loss and regain Othello's favour. He braces up Cassio by saying that he need not despair of restoration, that the punishment given him is prompted more by policy i.e.—in the interests of discipline,—than by any real displeasure against him, and that Cassio should only appeal to the General to be restored to his place. Furthermore, Iago brings in the aid of metaphor to impress upon his friend the soundness of his advice,—

What, man ! there are ways to recover the General again . you are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice ; even so, as one would beat his offenceless dog to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him again, and he's yours.

But Cassio, feeling the pricks of his tender conscience and possessing a high sense of justice, replies by saying—

I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer.

Would not the General throw into his face such retorts and questions?—

Drunk? and speak patriot? and squabble? swagger? swear?

Conscious of his own guilt, and deeply and sincerely penitent over it, he severely condemns the evil of *drink*, and exclaims against it in all bitterness,—

Thou invisible spirit of wine! if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil.

We see, here, Cassio full of genuine repentance for his moral lapse and full of hatred for wine, under the effects of which one 'discourses fustian with one's own shadow.' If only he had held out a little more firmly against Iago and withstood the temptation to drink as he attempted to do at the beginning, he would have avoided all this trouble to himself and possibly also the tragic consequences to others. But, alas! people are generally thoughtless, weak-minded, easily led or misled. They,—not all, but some of them,—get wise 'a day after the fair', become sadder and wiser only after the event. Nevertheless, the sincere repentance of Cassio and his bitter lament excite our sympathy for him, and the artful, wicked plans of Iago, our deepest hatred for the wretch.

At this self-reproach of Cassio, Iago, in all feigned ignorance of the affair and, as if anxious to learn in detail what had happened, and out of pity for his friend, tenderly asks him—

What was he that you followed with your sword?
What had he done to you?

Cassio honestly and truly replies that he does not know, as he was under the influence of wine. Iago would not leave him there, but, adding fuel to fire, questions—'Is't possible' (that you do not know)? Cassio answers that he remembers 'a mass of things, but nothing distinctly.' He remembers a quarrel, but why, and how it came about, he does not know. Iago's questions, so artfully put, serve only to revive and increase Cassio's painful feelings of repentance and anger, and so he exclaims in pity and wonder,—

O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasure, revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Here, again, Shakespeare intends a hit on the demoralising practice of 'drink,' rampant in those days, (as it deprived people of their Reason or rational thought, and degraded them to the level of unthinking beasts.) By this sacrifice of Reason,—the greatest

heritage of human beings—at the altar of Wine, a man truly transforms himself into an irrational creature. We see this practice still flourishing in civilized countries. It is observed and carried on in the name of a false etiquette or mode of social entertainment. But attempts are now being made in some places to arrest the process of demoralization caused by this evil.

While Cassio is denouncing this vice, Iago interrupts him by asking this question,—‘ If it is so bad, how did you manage to recover yourself from it so soon ? ’ To use his own words,—

Why, but you are now well enough! How came you thus recovered ?

To which, the simple and straightforward Cassio replies that the ‘ devil of wrath ’ has driven out ‘ the devil of drunkenness ’. By this, he means to say that when he was made angry, the effects of anger counteracted or overcame the effects of wine. This is in keeping with the popular belief (the truth of which is borne out by Science also) that one pain or shock drives out another. We have seen and heard of cases where a person suffering from any extreme physical pain or mental anguish (due to some sudden grief, hurt or functional disorder), either gets cured of his pain or anguish, or forgets it completely for the time, when his mind is diverted by some sudden news of excessive joy or grief or is treated to some sudden change of counter-thought. We see this fact mostly well illustrated by children. The result is due to the counter-action of forces. The shock or pain, due to its effects on the brain or nerves, is generally nullified by another of an opposing kind and of equal intensity. In the same manner, here we see the effects of a sudden and intense provocation, given by Roderigo, dispelling the effects of wine in Cassio. This is what Cassio implies when he says in his blunt but expressive way that—

It hath pleased the devil ‘drunkenness’ to give place to the devil ‘wrath’; one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Knowing his own shortcomings, he says that he has been led from one weakness to another, from Drink to Anger; from Anger to Brawl with all its disgraceful results. The knowledge of it makes him ashamed of himself, or as he says, it is enough—

To make me frankly despise myself.

Look at the severe contrast between the honest, frank and self-reviling Cassio, and the dishonest, dissembling and self-glorifying Iago. Seeing Cassio’s extreme mortification, Iago wishes to divert him from the moping tendency (and to arrest the process of further introspection,) so that he might egg him on or use him as a tool to fulfil his own dark designs. He breathes courage into him, because he has still to make use of him, as hitherto, only a part of his diabolical plan

has succeeded, viz., Cassio has been embroiled and 'put in some action that has offended the isle.' But the crowning part of his scheme is yet to be achieved, namely, 'to abuse him to the Moor in the rank grab', and to 'put the Moor at least into a jealousy so strong that judgment cannot cure.' In other words, Iago has yet to entangle Cassio and implicate him in a charge of illicit connection with Desdemona and thereby to excite the Moor's incurable jealousy

With this end in view, and ever alert and mindful of his whole scheme, Iago pooh-poohs Cassio's self-reproach and denunciation of 'drink' as the originator of the brawl and the serious consequences that have flowed from it. He remonstrates with Cassio, almost upbraids him in these words,—

Come, you are too severe a moralist:

By which, Iago means that Cassio is not justified in taking so serious a view of the incident. At the same time, he does not wish to appear unsympathetic to his friend or to excite any suspicion of his own indifference, and so he cleverly expresses his sorrow and sympathy thus—

As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

He means to say that, having regard to the 'time' which was about midnight; the 'place,' i.e., the Court or Guard of safety; 'the condition of this country,' namely, Cyprus which was in a war-like state and full of fear of an attack by the Turks, the affray should not have happened. But since it has happened, it cannot be undone, it is no use crying over spilt milk. It behoves a wise man, therefore, to make the best of a bad situation, to try to mend his loss as best as he can, and not to pine or fret over the past; or as Iago pithily puts it—

But since it is as it is,
Mend it for your own good.

But Cassio feels too ashamed and down-hearted to believe in Iago's suggestion of mending his 'crack'd love' by appealing to the Moor. He thinks that such an appeal will be positively useless, as Othello will naturally turn round and call him 'a drunkard.' Such an answer will silence him, even if he had as many tongues or mouths to speak with, as Hydra or the many-headed serpent, of Greek mythology. For, the answer would contain nothing but the bitter, painful truth. He is thoroughly conscious of his own mistake, and knows full well that such an appeal will do no good to him. As Cassio says—

I will ask him for my place again;
He shall tell me,—I am a drunkard.
Had I as many mouths as Hydra,
Such an answer would stop them all.

Then he mutters to himself in self-reproach ;—

To be now a sensible man—(being free from drink);
By and by a fool—(being tempted to drink),
And presently a beast!—(being dead drunk).

Thus, remorsefully thinking and complaining, Cassio treats lightly Iago's suggestion of mending the loss. Poor man, the more he thinks about his miserable predicament, the greater grows his hatred of drink, the cause of his downfall. Bitterly reminded of its woeful effects, he again condemns it thus,—

O strange ! Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil.

(Here, observe Shakespeare's constant hammering at this dire social evil of drink and it behoves all, interested in the uplift of humanity, to take note of this healthy warning and benefit by it) But Iago,—the impersonation of Evil—in his usual nonchalant manner treats with contempt Cassio's condemnation of Drink, and in palliation urges—

Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used ; exclaim no more against it

This is how Satan defends every vice and white-washes every crime when committed by himself or by his agents.

With this philosophic extenuation of 'good wine,' Iago slowly and cautiously begins to enmesh poor Cassio in his vile net. He starts abruptly with his profession of love for Cassio and asks in a moving and modest fashion if he does not think Iago loves him,

And good Lieutenant,
I think you think I love you,

Meaning, 'I venture to think you are satisfied that I love you.' Here, let us note the abrupt digression that Iago now thinks fit to adopt. When they are yet talking about Drink and its effects, he suddenly drops the topic and goes straight to his feelings of love and thereby disarms poor Cassio. The latter therefore replies that he is well-assured that Iago loves him. But, still smarting under the dire consequences of 'drink', he reverts to it again and again, exclaiming—'I drunk !' To this remorseful exclamation of Cassio, Iago replies that there is nothing extraordinary or strange about Cassio's fault and, for that matter, about that of any man who 'may be drunk at some time.'

After thus attenuating Cassio's guilt, Iago straightaway goes to the point at issue and tells him what he should do under the circumstances. He informs him that practically the 'General's wife is now the general,' as the latter loves her so much that he will do anything at her command or wish. Every one is struck by the way in which Othello shows his love and devotion for his wife, how he has enshrined her in his heart, how he is happily and

constantly contemplating the beauty of her form and the grace of her movements. This being so, Cassio should approach her, make a clean confession of his fault, and beg of her to help him to regain his position. To make clear to Cassio the prospect of success by the course suggested, the master-schemer Iago dilates upon the good qualities of Desdemona. She is easily accessible, he says, so very kind, so full of sympathy, that she will not only do as much as requested but also more. Such is her generous nature that she regards it a rare privilege to render help and be of service to others,—

She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested.

Iago expresses his certain conviction that Desdemona will easily patch up the difference between Cassio and Othello by pacifying the latter's anger. Holding out this prospect of success in all its allurements, the devil further impresses Cassio with the belief that, by adopting this course, he would grow still dearer to Othello than before, and that he would wager anything belonging to him for the success of his advice. In his trenchant style,—

And, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

After listening to this tempting advice and the reasons accompanying it, Cassio is persuaded of its soundness. He yields to the bait and expresses his satisfaction that Iago advises him well. Chuckling at his success and to further strengthen his hold over Cassio, Iago declares, with all the semblance of an honest man, that he has given the advice out of his sincere love and kindness for his friend. Thus won over and satisfied by the fiend, Cassio accepts the advice, undertakes to wait on Desdemona the next morning, and declares that he will grow desperate if he should fail in his efforts. Iago approves of Cassio's proposed course of action and dismisses him, saying—

Good night, Lieutenant,
I must to the watch.

Cassio also returns the salutation and, struck with the goodness of the man, calls him—

Honest Iago, good night.

PART XVII.

IAGO'S SOLILOQUY.

After Cassio's departure, Iago, to vindicate and please himself, now enters upon a course of specious reasoning with himself. He first begins to carefully weigh the steps by which he should proceed to achieve his detestable, devilish plans. Subjecting himself to a process of self-examination or rather self-justification, he asks

himself how he could be called a villain, when he has given a gratuitous piece of good advice to Cassio. It is the right one under the conditions, and is calculated to benefit him by enabling him to regain the favour of Othello. In his self-complacent style,—

And what's he then that says I play the villain ?
When this advice is free I give and honest.
Probable to thinking and indeed the course
To win the Moor again ?

He then proceeds to give the reasons for this advice. First, Desdemona is as generous in her character and gifts as the free elements of Nature themselves. Second, Othello is a perfect slave to her and will do anything for her for the mere asking, even if it were 'to renounce his baptism,' or his religion. (Baptism is a very sacred Christian rite, by which holy water is applied to a person to show his incorporation into the Church of Christ) Othello will consider no sacrifice too great to be made at the altar of Desdemona's love. He is a perfect slave to her love. She can do anything with him. In Iago's words,—

His soul is so entether'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake' do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function,

Under these circumstances, 'it is most easy to subdue the inclining Desdemona in any honest suit' Therefore, Iago asks himself, 'the advice that I am now giving to Cassio being directly to his good,—how am I then a villain?' Thus does the Devil question and answer himself. He considers his answers so logical, sound and admirable that he is quite satisfied with this process of self-vindication in the eyes of others.

All this show of reason and argument is, however, for the outside world,—the gullible public, so that the latter might not suspect him and know the underlying motive of his actions. His dissimulation is so perfect that everybody who knows him calls him 'honest Iago.' After gloating over his power to deceive even the cleverest of people, he reveals a bit of his true self by exclaiming to himself,—

.....Divinity of hell !
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now !

Here, Iago shows his real mind. Just as the devil, in tempting others to commit the most heinous crimes, will employ a great show of reason, selflessness, trusteeship, charity and justice, to blind his victims, so too, Iago says, he has done now. While 'this honest fool,' (Cassio is so-called because he foolishly believes in the 'bona-fides' or honesty of Iago's advice), appeals to Desdemona, and while she, in her sympathy, pleads and expostulates with Othello

on behalf of Cassio, Iago proposes to make the Moor believe that Desdemona is pleading for Cassio only out of her illicit love for him,—to satisfy ‘her body’s lust’,—

..... For, whilst this honest fool
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I’ll pour this pestilence into his ear,
That she repeals him for her body’s lust.

Iago is sure that Desdemona will spare no efforts with the Moor to make him relent in favour of Cassio. Here Iago sees his opportunity. He must so misconstrue her efforts as to make the Moor doubt her purity in proportion to the extent and intensity of her pleadings on behalf of Cassio. In other words, the stronger are the pleadings of Desdemona for Cassio, the greater will be the doubt thrown on her fidelity in the mind of Othello,—

And by how much she strives to do him good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.

In this way, Iago schemes to turn Desdemona’s generous virtue to her own ruin and to weave the snare ‘out of her own goodness’ to entangle all. As Iago puts it—

So will I turn her virtue into pitch;
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.

What impressions will this soliloquy produce on a healthy mind? Here, we witness the spectacle of a mighty intellect employed in the service of the Devil,—to promote base, selfish and infernal schemes under cover of friendship, honesty and love—how scientifically it chalks out its plans and lays down the details beforehand; how accurate are its predictions, and how smoothly and inevitably the expected results follow without exciting any suspicion of the evil motives and emotions of that intellect. Our blood boils at the unspeakable hypocrisy and the heartless villainies planned by this most wretched specimen of perverted, callous and cruel humanity. On account of this one scheming scoundrel, some very good souls,—such as Cassio the blunt and honest soldier; Othello, the magnanimous and artless general; and last but not least, Desdemona, the pink of purity, innocence and goodness;—are all to be involved and ultimately ruined. This is how, in the world at large, hypocrisy goes undetected, landing hundreds of good men and women in danger and trouble.

PART XVIII.

How Iago Silences the Grievances and Grumbings of Roderigo.

While Iago is thus maturing his fiendish plans to ruin others, turning over his thoughts, arguing and discussing with himself, Roderigo, ‘the poor trash of Venice’ comes up to him, disappointed and grumbling. Altho’ the fool has so far yielded to the sophistical arguments of the designing scoundrel, Iago, yet, at times, he suspects deception and flares up in indignation and gives

a bit of his mind to his deceiver. He now complains to him that he has followed him (Iago) all the way to Cyprus with a lot of money as advised, with the object of winning Desdemona; that, so far, no tangible benefit has accrued to him; that, in following Iago, he feels like a useless member of the Hunt or Chase, 'not like a hound that hunts, but like one that fills up the cry only;' that his money is almost spent; that he has been well cudgelled or beaten that night by Cassio, and that, as yet, he is not an inch nearer his goal of winning Desdemona. And he further adds, in fear, disgust and resignation, that, for all his trouble, bodily and mental, and for all the money he has wasted, his only gain or profit will be a lesson, learnt from bitter experience,—not to be so easily misled and fooled again by harkening to the advice of professing friends, and that he must return to Venice almost a pauper, but a sadder and wiser man. To quote his own words,—

And I think the issue will be, I shall have so much experience for my pains; and so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

Though Roderigo, in this forlorn condition, appears to enlist our sympathies, yet we cannot wholly excuse him for having made himself an accomplice with Iago in the heinous plot woven by that evil genius. Anyway, our pity does go out to him, especially when we remember that Nature has given him poor brains; that he, in his love-sick condition, has grown more gullible and credulous, and that he is pitted against the powerful and subtle machinations of a master mind. Shakespeare, in presenting this character to our view, seems to convey a wholesome moral for our guidance. He points to the inevitable fate of people who allow themselves to be swayed by illicit carnal emotions; who sacrifice their reason; and who, for their selfish ends, are ready to trust evil minds and engage themselves in unholy acts and alliances.

But Iago, with his master mind, is capable of bending anybody to his will. He has therefore little difficulty in turning Roderigo's moping and despairing thoughts by preaching his philosophy of patience and fortitude. With masterly argument, Iago exclaims,—'how poor are they that have not patience,' and plies his poor fool with a series of apparently unquestionable truths, saws and aphorisms. Here are a few of his excellent, flawless moral-maxims:—

How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft,
And wit depends on dilatory time

The truth of these maxims will be self-evident, even to the meanest intelligence,—(1) After sowing the seeds, we must wait patiently for the harvest (2) No wound can heal up suddenly but only gradually. (3) Magic or witchcraft are fictions of Fancy which can produce phantom-results at pleasure. (4) But Wisdom and Prudence are more solid virtues

which require time to ripen, and they show us the ways and means of gaining our ends and achieving success in due course of time only.

He further exhorts Roderigo to ask himself,—‘Does’t not go well?’ In asking himself this question, Roderigo must ponder well whether their progress thus far does not augur well for their ultimate success. Though Roderigo might be slightly hurt, Iago continues, by that trifling hurt or pain, he has brought about the dismissal of Cassio,—a solid achievement to be proud of, and prophetic of the final success of their plan. Whatever may be the other circumstances, he proceeds, the bud has blossomed and it will soon ripen into fruit, i.e.—their scheme has started well, by leading to Cassio’s dismissal and it will soon be crowned with complete success. His assurance is in keeping with the proverb—‘well begun is half done.’ Therefore, the best thing to do now is to be content with what has been accomplished and wait patiently for more. Iago asks his grumbling friend to busy himself in some pleasant action which will lighten the tedium of waiting.

Emphasizing this truth, he now hurriedly tells him—

Retire thee; go where thou art billeted (posted) :
 Away, I say, thou shalt know more hereafter
 Nay, get thee gone.

Iago speaks the concluding words of his advice and request in such a prompt, authoritative and imperative tone that they almost amount to a command to be obeyed at once. And, without giving any further time to the weak-minded fool to think, question or demur, Iago almost turns his back on him. What wonder, then, that the poor Roderigo at once goes away dumbfounded.

PART XIX.

Iago thinks over his *Modus Operandi*.

As soon as Roderigo goes away, Iago promptly thinks about the best methods of executing his plan. He says to himself,—

.....Two things are to be done: (1) My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress; I’ll set her on; (2) Myself the while to draw the Moor apart, and bring him jump when he may Cassio find soliciting his wife :

By this, he means that he will bring Othello to the place precisely at the time when Cassio is seen imploring or ‘soliciting his wife,’ so that his suspicions may thereby be excited. Having settled his *modus operandi*, Iago straightaway goes to his business lest his ingenious device should be spoiled by indifference and delay, saying—

.....ay, that’s the way ;
 Dull not device by coldness and delay.

Having laid his wicked scheme with masterly precision and skill, Iago now goes to work, weaving his net, even as the spider does, to drag his victims,—the poor, credulous fools,—into it.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF

ACT II.

The Scene now changes from Venice to Cyprus. The atmosphere here is entirely different from that of Venice,—the head-quarters of the General and the home of Desdemona and other important characters of the Play. Torn off from their native land and environment, they encounter a terrible storm both on sea and land. Passing thro' a rough and high-wrought sea, they reach the Island which is threatened with an attack by the Turkish Armada and is hence in a state of panic.

But the terrible tempest is soon followed by **some very favourable incidents**. 1. To begin with, the new arrivals and the islanders are thankful to the storm, since it has wrecked the invading Turkish fleet. They therefore feel greatly relieved and happy. 2. Again, Desdemona who left Venice somewhat later than Othello, safely reaches Cyprus before him in spite of her stormy voyage. She is naturally filled with fear and anxiety about his safety. Othello on his part, while weathering the storm, is anxious about the safety of his wife. And when he lands ashore and finds Desdemona already arrived, safe and sound, his heart overflows with gratitude and joy. He therefore bursts out in such rapturous expressions,—

It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus high, and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven!

3. Then again, a general holiday is proclaimed throughout the Island so that the people may indulge in feasting and merry-making. The public are therefore joyfully commemorating the two happy events,—the destruction of the hostile Turkish fleet, and the nuptials of their General.

But, in the midst of all this rejoicing, Satan, or the power of Evil, is secretly planning and doing its hellish work. Iago, the devil incarnate, makes Cassio drunk and easily gets him involved in a drunken brawl in which Montano, trying to stop Cassio, is seriously wounded. Through Iago's clever management, the alarm-bell of the town is set going; his tool, Roderigo goes out crying, *Mutiny!*; and the people again become panic-stricken. Othello soon appears on the scene, and on Iago's artful version of the affair, dismisses Cassio forthwith and retires for the night.

Cassio, now recovering from the effects of drink, feels sobered, sad and ashamed of himself. But Iago braces him up and, feigning love and friendship for him, offers him advice to regain the favour of the General. This advice appears very sane

and sound, but is given with a most wicked purpose of his own. When Cassio accepts his advice and departs, Iago indulges in a Satanic chuckle at the success of his plan—

.Divinity of hell!
 When devils will the blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
 As I do now: for whiles this honest fool
 Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
 And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
 I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,
 That she repeals him for her body's lust;

The motive-power,—furnished by the evil emotions of Envy, Jealousy, Hate and Malice, Greed and Selfishness,—was seen in its hidden and embryonic form in the First Act. It has become visible in its operations in this Act (1) Iago has succeeded in bringing Roderigo to Cyprus with the ostensible object of helping him to win over Desdemona, but with the real object of using him as a tool in the execution of his wicked schemes (2) Another object of his was to bring about the downfall of Cassio, the object of his envy. Iago has succeeded here also, as Cassio is hit hard, dismissed, practically ruined.

Iago's third plan is, to accuse Cassio to Othello of misconduct with Desdemona. For this purpose, he has got to make a further diabolical use of Cassio in ruining Othello and Desdemona, by 'abusing Othello's ear that he (Cassio) is too familiar with his wife,'; by 'practicing upon his peace and quiet even to madness'; by 'turning Desdemona's virtue into pitch,' and 'out, of her own goodness making the net that shall enmesh them all'

To succeed in this plan, Iago persuades the unwilling Cassio to appeal to Desdemona for restoration to his place. The devil, the instrument of the catastrophe (Iago), argues with himself and decides to turn the pleading of Desdemona on behalf of Cassio to her own ruin. The greater her pleadings, the stronger will be the doubts of Othello about his wife's fidelity. To gain this end,—the third step of the scheme,—Iago has succeeded in bringing round Cassio to appeal to Desdemona.

Just now, Roderigo, in disgust at the indefinite putting off of his aim (of winning over Desdemona), threatens to secede. But the master-minded Iago turns his resolve and brings him round.

Iago now addresses himself to the task before him,—1. To set Emilia, his wife, to speak to her mistress Desdemona on behalf of Cassio: 2. To bring Othello to the place to witness Cassio just in the act of pleading to Desdemona.

To sum up:—We find the following factors contributing to the final catastrophe in this act,—

1. Roderigo has been brought to Cyprus to be used as a tool in the execution of the impending catastrophe.

2. Iago's forecast, that Cassio will be the proper man to be used in poisoning Othello's mind against Desdemona, proves accurate. He has noticed Cassio's free and pleasant way of speaking to Emilia and to Desdemona, kissing the former's hand, and courteously welcoming them in Cyprus. He is now going to make a wicked use of it.

3. Roderigo is made to keep watch along with Cassio that night, so that he might pick a quarrel with the latter and create a hubbub.

4. Cassio is tempted to drink and gets drunk.

5. Cassio is provoked and gets into a broil with Montano.

6. The alarm bell is sounded and Othello appears on the scene.

7. Cassio is dismissed.

Thus far, the two main preliminary factors of Iago's plan are accomplished,—1. bringing Roderigo to Cyprus, and 2. the dismissal of Cassio. The third, *viz* to accuse Cassio of misconduct with Desdemona, is foreshadowed. This and the other items of Iago's programme await fulfilment in the succeeding Acts.

(AN OUTLINE OF THE STORY, ACT BY ACT)

A brief account of the events of

ACT III.

(First three Scenes.)

As advised by Iago, Cassio, thro' the aid of Emilia, obtains an interview with Desdemona. He now eagerly appeals to her to intercede on his behalf with her husband and to recommend his restoration. She, of course, promises to help him and to do her best for him. In the meantime, Iago manages to bring Othello on the Scene. And, while they are still at a distance, they see Cassio going away from the Castle. Upon this, Iago makes a dark and dubious comment,—‘Ha! I like not that’. By this, he implies that he considers the meeting between Desdemona and Cassio to be of a suspicious nature. Thus, he sows the first seeds of doubt in Othello.

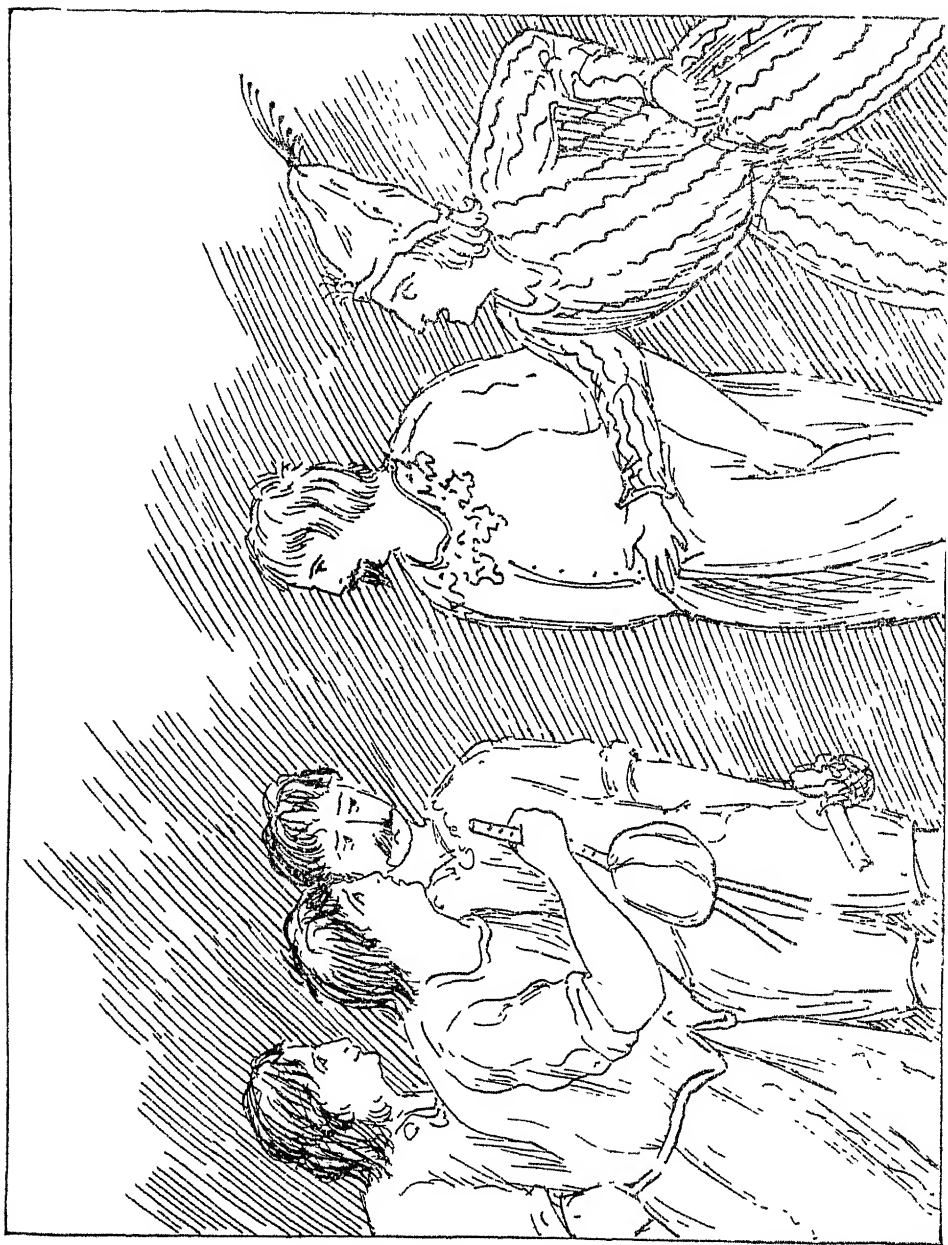
Both arrive at the castle and Desdemona, seeing Othello, at once starts pleading for Cassio. With a child-like persistency, she recommends to her husband Cassio's immediate recall and reconciliation. Othello promises to restore him soon,—not then, but sometime later.

Iago takes advantage of Desdemona's pleading for Cassio. When alone with his master, professing himself to be an honest and open friend, he succeeds in creating and deepening the doubt about her chastity. This he does so reluctantly, cautiously, and skilfully, that Othello is led to believe that Iago has some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown. So, he asks him, ‘if thou dost love me, show me thy thought.’ And when Othello demands proofs, Iago cleverly concocts certain incidents or materials and adduces them as circumstantial evidence. With these, Othello's mind is poisoned and disturbed.

A little later, Desdemona comes to call him and remind him of the ‘dinner and the generous islanders by you invited’ waiting for him. He replies faintly and says that he has a headache. His wife takes out her napkin and binds his head with it. But he puts it off, saying it is too small; and she drops it in a hurry and forgets all about it.

Emilia picks it up and gives it to her husband who has so often asked for it. Later on, Iago carefully places it in Cassio's room and tells Othello that he saw it with Cassio, who received it as a loving gift from Desdemona. Along with other concocted proofs, such as Cassio's guilty confession and mutterings of his love and kisses for Desdemona in his dreams, the story of this handkerchief,—Othello's first precious love-token to his wife,—now convinces him of her guilt. Thus convinced and inflamed, Othello is burning with thoughts of vengeance against both Cassio and his wife. But he has not yet seen with his own eyes *that* handkerchief in Cassio's possession.

Cassio, Clown and the musicians.



Music hath charms but not always.

(Pic 23).

ACT III.

SCENE I.—CYPRUS: BEFORE THE CASTLE.

Enter Cassio, Clown and some Musicians

CAS:—Masters, play here,—I will content¹ your pains—something that's brief, and bid 'Good morrow, General'.² [Music.]

Enter Clown.

CLO:—Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naple that they speak i' the nose thus³?

First MUS:—How, sir, how?

CLO:—Are these, I pray you, wind-instruments?

First MUS.—Ay, marry, are they, sir.

CLO:—O! thereby hangs a tail⁴.

First MUS.—Whereby hangs a tale⁵, sir?

CLO —Marry, sir, by many a wind-instrument that I know⁶ But, masters, here's money for you; and the General so likes your music, that he desires you, for love's sake,⁷ to make no more noise with it.

First MUS:—Well, sir, we will not.

CLO —If you have any music that may not be heard, to 't again; but, as they say, to hear music the General does not greatly care.

First MUS:—We have none such, sir

CLO:—Then put up your pipes in you bag, for I'll away. Go; vanish into air; away! [Exit Musicians.]

CAS:—Dost thou hear, mine honest friend?

CLO:—No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

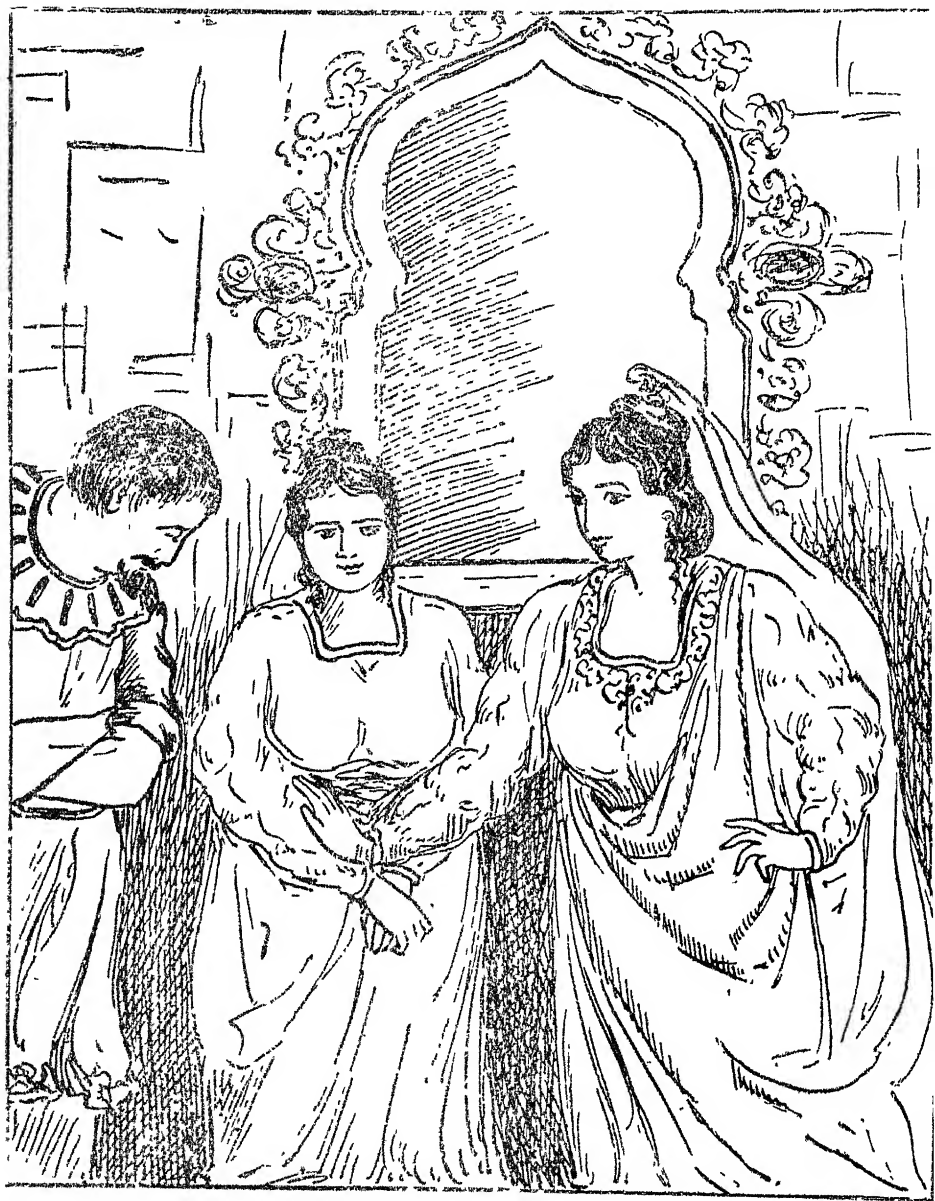
CAS:—Prithee, keep up thy quillets⁸ There's a poor⁹ piece of gold for thee. if the gentlewoman that attends the General's wife be stirring,¹⁰ tell her there's one Cassio entreats her¹¹ a little favour of speech. wilt thou do this?

CLO:—She is stirring, sir. if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.¹²

CAS —Do, good my friend. [Exit Clown.]

1 Content: reward. 2. Something General sing a short welcome song to greet the General in the morning. This refers to the custom of greeting a newly married pair with a morning song, on the morning following the night of their marriage. 3 Have .. thus? why do your instruments produce a nasal sound, like the voice of one whose nose has been affected by syphilis? This has reference to the origin of this disease in Naples. 4. Tail the ribbons tied to the end of the instruments. 5. Tale story or secret. Note the play upon the two words of different meanings, but, pronounced alike. 6. Byknow there are stories or secrets connected with many musical instruments I know (such as love-affairs) 7. For love's sake: if you have any love or respect (for him). 8. Quillets puns or tricks of speech. 9. Poor. small 10 Stirring, awake and moving about, 11. One .. her: one Cassio (who) entreats (of) her'. (i.e.) who desires an interview with her. 12. Seem.....her: appear or arrange to inform her.

Cassio's meeting with Desdemona, arranged through Emilia.



But beware of the snakes lurking in your path.

(Pic. 24).

CASSIO'S MEETING WITH DESDEMONA ARRANGED THROUGH EMILIA.

CAS.—I have made bold, Iago, to send in to your wife ; my suit to her is, that she will, to virtuous Desdemona, procure me some access.

IAGO.—I'll send her to you presently ; and I'll devise a mean¹ to draw the Moor out of the way, that your converse and business may be more free.

CAS.—I humbly thank you for 't. (Exit Iago) I never knew a Florentine² more kind and honest.

Enter Emilia.

EMI.—Good morrow, good Lieutenant: I am sorry for your displeasure ;³ but all will soon be well. The General and his wife are talking of it, and she speaks for you stoutly : the Moor replies that he, you hurt, is of great fame in Cyprus and great affinity,⁴ and that in wholesome wisdom he might not but refuse you,⁵ but he protests⁶ he loves you, and needs no other suitor⁷ but his likings to take the safest occasion by the front⁸ to bring you in again.

CAS.—Yet, I beseech you, if you think fit, or that it may be done, give me advantage of some brief discourse with Desdemona alone.

EMI.—Pray you, come in : I will bestow you⁹ where you shall have time to speak your bosom freely.

CAS.—I am much bound¹⁰ to you.

SCENE II. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE:

Enter Othello, Iago, and Gentlemen.

OTH.—These letters give, Iago, to the pilot, and, by him, do my duties to the Senate.¹¹ That done, I will be walking on the works ;¹² Repair¹³ there to me.

IAGO.—Well, my good lord, I'll do 't. [Exit Iago.]

OTH.—This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

GENT.—We'll wait upon your lordship. [Exit.]

1. Mean: means, plan. 2. Florentine one belonging to Florence (referring to Iago). 3. Displeasure: mishap. 4. Great affinity highly related or connected (i. e.) coming of a noble family. 5. In . you . policy arising out of the situation required him to dismiss you. 6. Protests: declares emphatically. 7. Suitor: pleader or recommendation. 8. To . front . to seek the earliest chance which will be consistent with safety. 9. Bestow you: place you in a proper position. 10. Bound: obliged. 11. And by.....Senate: and through him send my respects to the Senate. 12. Works: buildings under construction. 13. Repair: come.

Desdemona assures Cassio that she will do her best for him.



- (1) A good soul is ever ready and willing to help others.
- (2) But Innocence, for want of Intelligence, is easily entrapped.

(FIG. 25).

SCENE III.—IN THE GARDEN OF THE CASTLE.

Enter Desdemona, Cassio and Emilia.

DES:—Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do all my abilities¹ in thy behalf.

EMI.—Good madam, do : I warrant, it grieves my husband, as if the case were his.

DES:—O! that's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio, but I will have my lord and you again as friendly as you were

CAS.—Bounteous madam, whatever shall become of Michael Cassio, he's never any thing but your true servant.

DES.—I know 't; I thank you. You do love my lord; you have known him long; and be you well assur'd he shall in strangeness stand no further off than in a politic distance.²

CAS.—Ay, but, lady, that policy may either last so long, or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,³ or breed itself so out of circumstance,⁴ that, I being absent and my place supplied,⁵ my General will forget my love and service.

DES.—Do not doubt⁶ that; before Emilia, here, I give thee warrant⁷ of thy place. Assure thee,⁸ if I do vow a friendship,⁹ I'll perform it to the last article.¹⁰ My lord shall never rest;¹¹ I will watch him tame,¹² and talk him out of patience;¹³ his bed shall seem a school;¹⁴ his board a shrift;¹⁵ I'll intermingle every thing he does with Cassio's suit; therefore, be merry, Cassio, for, thy solicitor¹⁶ shall rather die than give thy cause away.

ENTER OTHELLO AND IAGO (*at a distance*).

EMI.—Madam, here comes my lord.

CAS.—Madam, I will take my leave.

DES.—Why, stay, and hear me speak.

CAS.—Madam, not now, I am very ill at ease,¹⁷ unfit for mine own purposes.¹⁸

DES.—Well, do your discretion.¹⁹

[Exit CASSIO]

1. I will ...abilities : I will use all my powers or influence. 2. He shall.....distance · he shall keep you aloof or estranged only to such an extent that may be necessary for the sake of policy. 3. Feed.....diet · be kept upon such slender grounds. 4. Breed.....circumstance · grow stronger owing to unexpected events. 5. Place supplied · office being filled up. 6. Doubt : fear. 7. Warrant . assurance or guarantee. 8. Assure thee : assure thyself or be certain. 9. Vow a friendship . promise a help. 10. To the last article · to the last degree or to its utmost. 11. My... ..rest . I shall never let my husband rest. 12. I will.....tame · I will keep him awake and tame him (or, bring him round). This refers to the custom of taming hawks and other birds by keeping them from sleep. 13. Talk.....patience · talk to him till he feels tired. 14. His.....school · his bed shall be a place to hear my lectures in. 15. His.....shrift : his eating-place shall be a confessional, (i.e.) a place where confessions are made to the priests. (In bed, I shall be his teacher ; at food, I shall be his priest). 16. Solicitor : pleader. 17. Very ill at ease : very much troubled in mind. 18. Unfit.....purposes · I cannot look after even my own affairs. 19. Do your discretion : do as you think fit.

Iago misinterprets the innocent meeting between Cassio and Desdemona, and begins to poison Othello's mind with jealousy.



How easily are our evil emotions stirred!

(Pic. 26).

IAGO POISONS OTHELLO'S MIND BY MISINTERPRETING THE INNOCENT MEETING.

IAGO: Ha! I like not that¹

OTH: (*Turning suddenly to him*) What dost thou say?

IAGO: Nothing, my lord. or if,—I know not what.

OTH: [*Looks at papers*] Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

IAGO: Cassio, my lord! No, sure, I cannot think it, that he would steal away so guilty-like, seeing you coming.

OTH: I do believe 'twas he. (*Seated in deep thought*) Enter Desdemona.

DES: How now, my lord! I have been talking with a suitor² here, a man that languishes in your displeasure.³

OTH: Who is 't you mean?

DES: Why, your Lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord, if I have any grace or power to move⁴ you, his present reconciliation take; for, if he be not that truly loves you, that errs in ignorance and not in cunning,⁵ I have no judgment in an honest face.⁶ I prithee, call him back.

OTH: Went he hence now?

DES: Ay, sooth, so humbled, that he hath left part of his grief with me, to suffer with him.⁷ Good love, call him back.

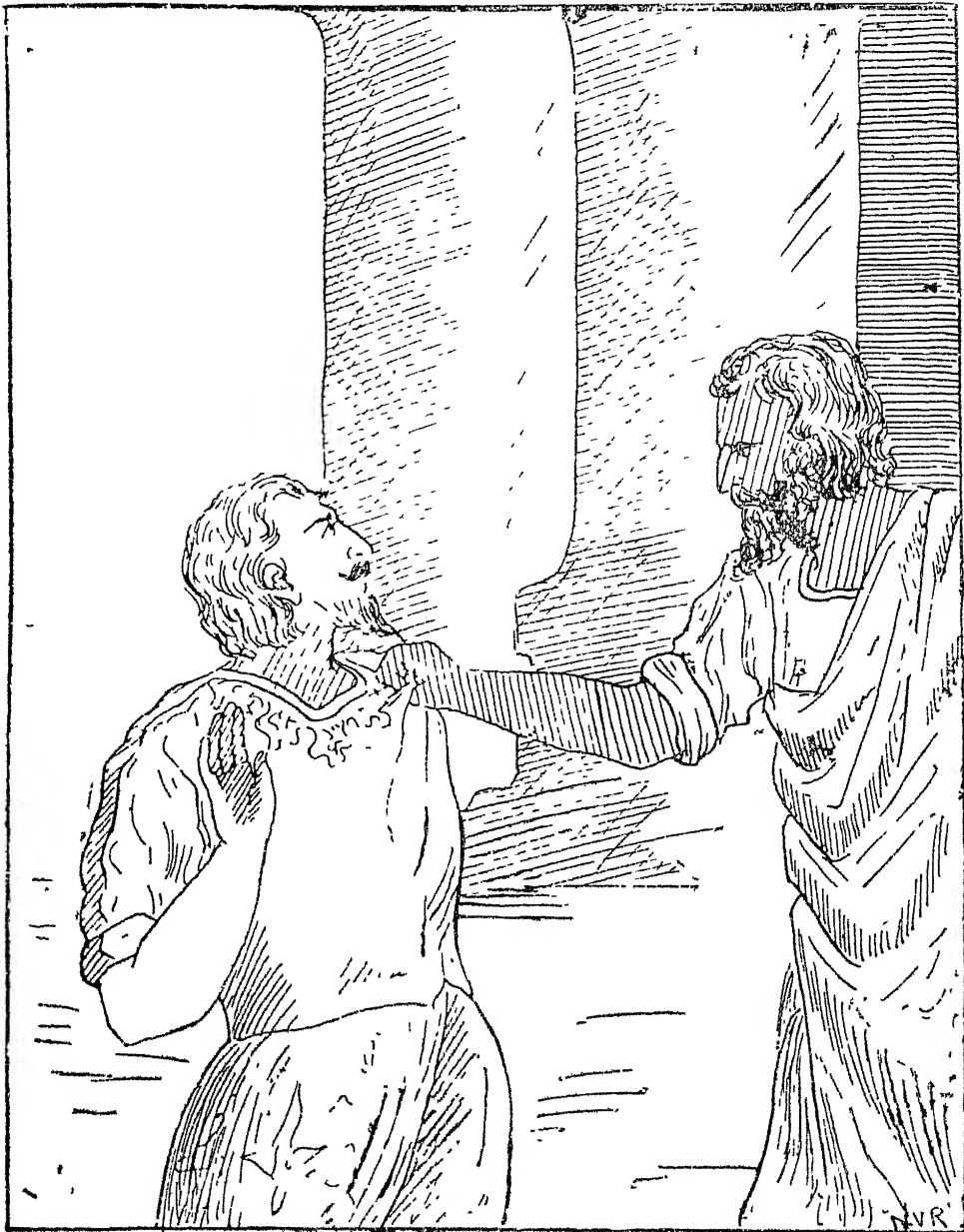
OTH: Not now, sweet Desdemona, some other time.

DES: But, shall 't be shortly? * * * To-morrow night; or Tuesday morn; on Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn. I prithee, name the time; but, let it not exceed three days: in faith, he's penitent; and yet his trespass,⁸ in our common reason,⁹—save that, they say, the wars must make examples out of their best¹⁰,—is not almost a fault to incur a private check¹¹. When shall he come? tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul, what you could ask me, that I should deny, or stand so mammering on.¹² What! Michael Cassio, that came a-wooing with you, and so many a time, when I have spoke of you dispraisingly, hath ta'en your part. To have so much to do to bring him in?¹³ Trust me, I could do much—

OTH: Prithee, no more; let him come when he will; I will deny thee nothing. (*Exit Desdemona*) Excellent wretch!¹⁴ Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee!¹⁵ and when I love thee not, chaos is come again.

1. That: referring to Cassio's silent departure. 2. Suitor: applicant. 3. Languishes... displeasure: feels dejected as a result of your disfavour. 4. Move: persuade or influence. 5. Cunning: artful practice, deceit. 6. I have.....face: I lack the power to judge aright honesty from dishonesty. 7. That.....him: that his cause has grieved me also, as it has done him. 8. Trespass: offence. 9. In.....reason: when considered reasonably. 10. Save.....best: except that, according to popular idea, this being a war time, it requires exemplary punishment for any offence of even the best of us. 11. Is not:.... check is hardly such an offence as to merit your personal ill-will. 12. I wonder.....mammering on: I doubt if I could ever deny you or mammer, (that is, hesitate to grant) anything asked of me. 13. To have.....in? must I take so much trouble to reconcile such a man to you? 14. Wretch a term of endearment. 15. Perdition.....thee: hell or confusion overtakes me, if I do not love you.

Othello, inflamed and disturbed, clutches Iago hard and shakes him.



The natural resentment of a good man against the slanderous imputations of designing rogues.

(Pic. 27).

IAGO CONTINUES THE PROCESS OF POISONING OTHELLO'S MIND.

IAGO. My noble lord,—

OTH: What dost thou say, Iago?

IAGO Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady, know of your love?

OTH: He did from first to last. why dost thou ask?

IAGO: But for a satisfaction of my thought; no further harm.¹

OTH. Why of thy thought,² Iago?

IAGO. I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

OTH. O, yes, and went between us very oft.

IAGO: Indeed!

OTH. *Indeed!* ay, indeed; discern'st thou aught in that?³ Is he not honest?

IAGO: Honest, my lord!.....honest, for aught I know.

OTH. What dost thou think?

IAGO. Think, my lord?

OTH [*Aside*] Think, my lord! By Heaven, he echoes me,⁴ as if there were some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown.⁵

[*To Iago*] Thou dost mean something. I heard thee say but⁶ now, thou lik'dst not that, when Cassio left my wife. What didst not like? And, when I told thee he was of my counsel in my whole course of wooing, thou criedst, '*Indeed!*' and didst contract and purse⁷ thy brow together, as if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain some horrible conceit.⁸ If thou dost love me, show me thy thought⁹

IAGO. My lord, you know I love you.

OTH I think thou dost; and, for I know thou art full of love and honesty, and weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,¹⁰ therefore these stops¹¹ of thine fright me the more, for, such things in a false disloyal knave are tricks of custom;¹² but, in a man that's just,¹³ they are close delations¹⁴ working from the heart that passion cannot rule.¹⁵

1. But forharm · only to satisfy my curiosity and for nothing else, (i.e.) with no bad intention. 2. Why.thought · why is your thought or mind (i. e. you) so curious about it? 3. Discern'st. ...that? do you see anything suspicious or particular in that? 4. Echoes me · repeats my thoughts. 5. As if... shown: as if he has something monstrous or horrible in his mind which he considers too wicked or shameful to be openly expressed 6. But · even 7. Contract and purse · narrow and raise. 8. Horrible conceit · wicked idea 9. Show.....thought · open your mind to me, do not hide anything from me. 10. Weigh'st... ·breath · you think deeply before you express your ideas. 11. Stops · short, broken sentences and pauses in-between. 12. Such, .. custom. such words and exclamations on the part of a treacherous villain may be taken to be his usual devices. 13. Just. · honest, straight-forward. 14. Close delations · secret accusations or informations. 15. Working.....rule. · being deep-seated in the heart over which other feelings have no control; i.e. they rise uppermost to be expressed.

Iago further ruffles Othello with his master-touches, quories and hints; also with his vile thoughts,—half-expressed and half-suppressed.



O! that we could see the workings of a villainous mind behind his smooth exterior!

(Pic 28)

IAGO CONTINUES THE PROCESS OF POISONING WITH GREATER SKILL.

IAGO: (*As*) For¹ Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn, I think, that he is honest.

OTH . I think so too.

IAGO : (*Then*) Men should be what they seem ;² or those that be not, would, they might seem none !³

OTH . Certain, men should be what they seem ⁴

IAGO Why then, I think, Cassio's an honest man. (*because he appears to be honest*).

OTH Nay, yet there's more in this ⁵ I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings, as thou dost ruminate ;⁶ and give thy worst of thoughts the worst of words.⁷

IAGO Good my lord, pardon me ; though I am bound to every act of duty, I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.⁸ Utter my thoughts ? Why, say,⁹ they are vile and false, as where's that palace whereinto foul things sometimes intrude not ?¹⁰ Who has a breast so pure but¹¹ some uncleanly apprehensions¹² keep leets and law-days,¹³ and in session sit with meditations lawful ?¹⁴

OTH Thou dost conspire against thy friend,¹⁵ Iago, if thou but think'st him wrong'd¹⁶ and mak'st his ear a stranger to thy thoughts.¹⁷

IAGO : I do beseech you,—though I perchance am vicious in my guess,¹⁸ as, I confess, it is my nature's plague to spy into abuses,¹⁹ and oft my jealousy shapes faults that are not,²⁰—

1 For . as for 2 Men....seen the character of men ought to coincide with their appearances or outward conduct 3 Those...none those who are not really honest, should not appear to be so 4 Men... seem if men appear to be honest, they should really be honest. 5 Yet, this, yet there is something behind the conclusion drawn about Cassio. 6 Ruminare reflect ; or, deeply and repeatedly think. 7 Give words even if your thoughts be wicked, express them bluntly, coarsely, even in bad and unsuitable words if need be. 8 I am not to I am not obliged to (do) that (which) all slaves are free to (do) that is, while even slaves are free to express or not to express their thoughts, why should I feel under compulsion to express mine. 9 Say suppose. 10 As ...not because even high and noble circles (i.e. people of high rank and wealth) are not exempt from scandalous imputations. 11, But that (has) not 12. Uncleanly.....apprehensions impure conceptions or thoughts. 13 Keep leets and law-days . work, hold court (as Judges do on fixed days). 14. In session... .lawful : sit (in judgment) with pure and proper thoughts. (i.e. there is none, however pure-minded, who is not at times open to evil thoughts). 15. Thoufriend . you are working or going against the interests of your friend ; i.e. myself. 16. Wronged : deceived or harmed (by others) 17. Mak'stthoughts . keep him ignorant by not informing him of your thoughts, (i.e.) of what you know. 18. Vicious in my guess wrong or wicked in my surmises. 19. It is.....abuses : It is my pestilential nature or bad habit to probe into the sins and faults of others. 20. Oft.....not , very often my suspicious (or critical) habit sees defects that do not exist,

that your wisdom yet, from one that so imperfectly conceits, would take no notice,¹ nor build yourself a trouble out of his scattering and unsure observance.² It were not³ for your quiet⁴ nor your good,⁵ nor for my manhood,⁶ honesty, or wisdom, to let you know my thoughts.

OTH : What dost thou mean ?

IAGO : *Good name* in man and woman, dear my Lord, is the immediate jewel of their souls.⁷ Who steals my purse, steals trash ;⁸ 'tis something, nothing ; 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.⁹ But, he that filches¹⁰ from me my *good name*, robs me of that which not enriches him, and makes me poor indeed¹¹.

OTH : By Heaven, I'll know thy thoughts.

IAGO . You *cannot*, if my heart were in your hand ; nor *shall not*, whilst 'tis in my custody.¹²

OTH : Ha !

IAGO . O ! beware, my Lord, of Jealousy. It is the green-ey'd monster¹³ which doth mock the meat it feeds on ;¹⁴ that cuckold lives in bliss who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger.¹⁵

1. That.....notice that, as a wise and experienced person, you will not take any notice of the defective conceits or surmises of one (like me) 2. Nor.....observance do not create a trouble for yourself by following his stray and uncertain observation. 3 It were not it would not be proper. 4 Quiet peace of mind. 5. Good · benefit or welfare. 6. Manhood ; character as a man. 7. Good. souls · reputation, or good character, for men as well as women, is (or, should be) their most precious possession. 8. Who ..trash he who robs me of my money, robs me of (what should be considered as) a rubbish or useless thing. 9 Has .. thousands has been slavishly or meanly used by many. 10 Filches · steals 11. Whichindeed . which does not make him any the richer or better, but certainly makes me the poorer for it

(It is worthy of note how the villain Iago plays a double game before different persons. (a) He praises the potency of money before Rodengo and fleeces him of it, but here, he condemns it as mere 'trash.' (b) Similarly, he decries 'Reputation' before Cassio as 'an idle and most false imposition' ; but, now, he extolls it in the presence of Othello as 'the immediate Jewel' for men and women alike)

12. You.....custody you cannot know the workings of my heart i.e. my thoughts, even if my heart were in your possession or control.; much less now that my heart is entirely in my keeping. (Note the force between 'cannot' and 'shall not' in the two lines. The first refers to the impossibility of Othello to know ; the second refers to the determination of Iago not to let Othello know). 13 Green-eyed monster a horrible creature supposed to possess light greenish eyes. Jealousy is here compared to a horrible monster which tortures its victims, like a cat which plays with the mouse before it eats it up. Jealousy is a painful fear, a torturing, uneasy feeling,—that another has engaged the affections of one we love, 14 Which....on which (monster of Jealousy) makes fun of (i.e. tortures) the person who yields to it, or who becomes a victim to it. 15. That,wronger : that person whose wife has proved false to him is still happy, i.e. lives in a state of blissful indifference, when, fully aware of the fact, he does not hate or has no ill-will against the man who has wronged her.

But, O ! what damned minutes tells he o'er who doles, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves !¹

OTH. O misery !

IAGO :—Poor and content is rich, and rich enough² ; but, riches fineless is as poor as winter to him that ever fears he shall be poor.³ Good Heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend from jealousy !⁴

OTH.—Why, why is this ? Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,⁵ to follow still the changes of the moon with fresh suspicions?⁶

No ; to be once in doubt is once to be resolved.⁷ Exchange me for a goat⁸ when I shall turn the business of my soul to such exsufficate⁹ and blown¹⁰ surmises, matching¹¹ thy inference.¹²

'Tis not to make me jealous, to say¹³ my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company, is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well ; where virtue is, these are more virtuous.¹⁴ Nor from mine own weak merits¹⁵ will I draw the smallest fear, or doubt, of her revolt;¹⁶ For, she had eyes, and chose me.

No, Iago ; I'll see before I doubt ; when I doubt, prove ; and, on the proof, there is no more but this,—[makes a gesture]—away at once with love or jealousy !¹⁷

1. What.....loves : that man, who excessively loves his wife, yet is doubtful of her faithfulness ; or who has his suspicions, yet loves her deeply ; spends his time most miserably. (Tells over : counts or spends. Damned minutes . moments full of torture.) 2. Poor.....enough : to be poor and yet contented is to be sufficiently rich 3. But.....poor but, to be finelessly or endlessly rich and yet to be ever afraid of becoming poor (by chance or misfortune) is to be as poor as winter (i.e. is to be as poor or miserable in mind, as trees are, when shorn of leaves, or as animals which feel pinched, during Winter) 4. Good jealousy O, good God, save (the souls of all my tribe) all men from jealousy. 5 Make jealousy . live a life of jealousy, (i.e.) become jealous 6. To follow. suspicions : to increase or grow in my jealousy from day to day as the moon does in her course from the new moon-day to that of the full-moon. 7. No ; to beresolved on the other hand, when once I am confirmed in my doubt, I am at once settled in my resolution (that is, I do not waste my time in further thought or contemplation, but act at once). Note here the contrast between Othello and Hamlet. 8. Goat : simpleton or fool. 9. Exsufflicate : ex-sufficient or over-sufficient ; that is over-full or superfluous. 10. Blown exploded or rejected, that is, useless. 11. Matching : corresponding to ; or like. 12. Exchange.....inference : take me for a fool if, at any time, I shall divert the purpose on which I have become determined to such superfluous and useless conjectures as are suggested by you ; (that is, when once I have settled my course of action, I stick to it and waste no time on further theories or conjectures) 13. 'Tis not.....say . I shall not become jealous, if I am told that, etc., 14. Where.....virtuous' in a good and pure-minded person, these are only additional graces. 15. Weak merits defective mind 16. Revolt sudden change (by transferring her love to another.) 17. I'll see..... jealousy : I will satisfy myself before suspecting anything ; when I suspect a thing, I shall have it proved, and, when once it is proved, I will but act at once, without wasting any further thought on love or jealousy.

Iago's pernicious but plausible reasons succeed in making Othello deeply 'moved' and perplexed.



A master-hypocrite, with an oily tongue and a genius for jugglery and sophistry, will fool any one, but not for all time.

IAGO :—I am glad of it ; for, now, I shall have reason
 To show the love and duty that I bear you
 With franker spirit ;¹ therefore, as I am bound,
 Receive it from me ; I speak not yet of proof.
 Look to your wife ; observe her well with Cassio ;
 Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure .²
 I would not have your free and noble nature
 Out of self-bounty be abus'd,³ look to 't ;
 I know our country disposition⁴ well ;
 In Venice, they do let Heaven see the pranks
 They dare not show their husbands;⁵ their best conscience
 Is not to leave 't undone, but keep 't unknown.⁶

OTH :—Dost thou say so ?

IAGO :—She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
 And, when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,⁷
 She lov'd them most.

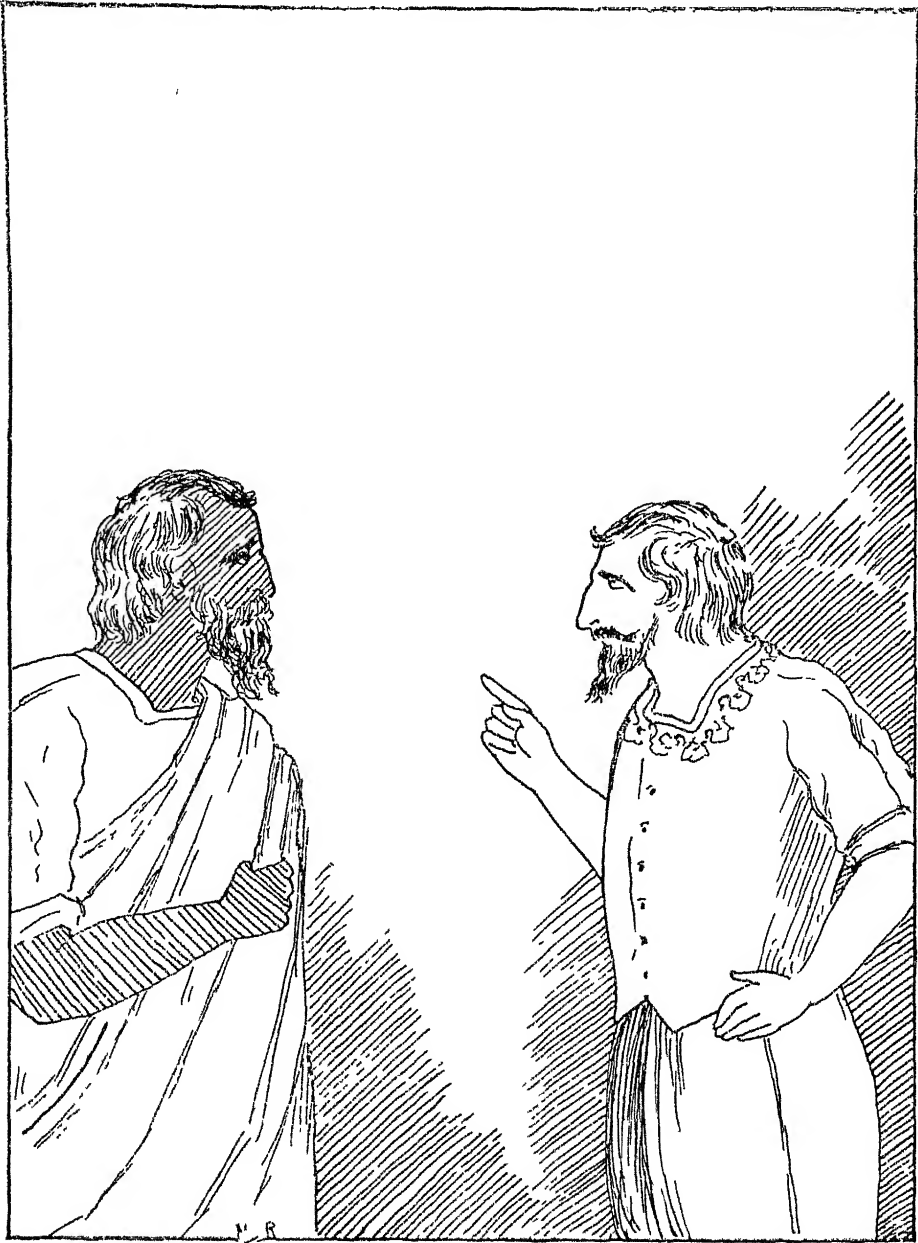
OTH :—And so she did.

IAGO :—Why, go to, then ;
 She that so young could give out such a seeming⁸
 To seel her father's eyes up close as oak ;⁹
 He thought 'twas witchcraft ;—but I am much to blame ;
 I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
 For too much loving you.

OTH .—I am bound to thee for ever.

1. With franker spirit more openly. 2. Wear ... secure watch her, without feeling jealous of, or confident about, her. 3. I would..... abus'd I would not like to see your open and generous nature corrupted by itself or cheated of itself. (that is, I shall not use, or take advantage of, your good nature to spoil it ; that is, your virtue should not be a means for undoing you.) 4. Country disposition : the character of the people of my country. (Venice was at that time very corrupt.) 5. They.husbands : They commit wicked acts quite unknown to their husbands 6. Their ... unknown their best plan is, not so much to avoid it, as to hide it. 7. Your looks . your eyes ; that is, yourself. 8. Seeming : pretence. 9. To seel ... oak to blind her father completely. (Close as oak as close as the grain of an oak-tree ; that is, very close-grained or hard and tough ; hence, absolutely or completely)

On seeing Othello deeply moved, Iago puts in a few more artful touches to strengthen his hold on him.



The Spider **knows** how to weave his web thicker round his victim.

(Pic. 29.)

SEEING OTHELLO MOVED, IAGO PUTS IN MORE FINISHING TOUCHES.

IAGO: I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.¹

OTH: Not a jot, not a jot.

IAGO I' faith, I fear it has. I hope you will consider what is spoke comes from my love. But, I do see, you're mov'd;² I am to pray you not to strain³ my speech to grosser issues⁴ nor to larger reach⁵ than to suspicion.....Should you do so, my lord, my speech should fall into such vile success⁶ as my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy friend,—my lord, I see you're mov'd.

OTH. No, not much mov'd: I do not think but⁷ Desdemona's honest.

IAGO: Long live she so! and long live you to think so!

OTH: And yet, how nature erring from itself,⁸ —

IAGO: Ay, there's the point.⁹ as,—to be bold with you,—not to affect¹⁰ many proposed matches of her own clime, complexion, and degree¹¹ whereto, we see, in all things nature tends;¹² Foh!¹³ one may smell¹⁴ in such, a will most rank,¹⁵ foul disproportion,¹⁶ thoughts unnatural. But, pardon me; I do not in position¹⁷ distinctly speak of her, though, I may fear, her will,¹⁸ recoiling¹⁹ to her better judgement, may fall to match²⁰ you with her country forms,²¹ and happily²² repent.

OTH: Farewell, farewell. If more thou dost perceive, let me know more: set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, Iago.

IAGO. My lord, I take my leave. [Going].

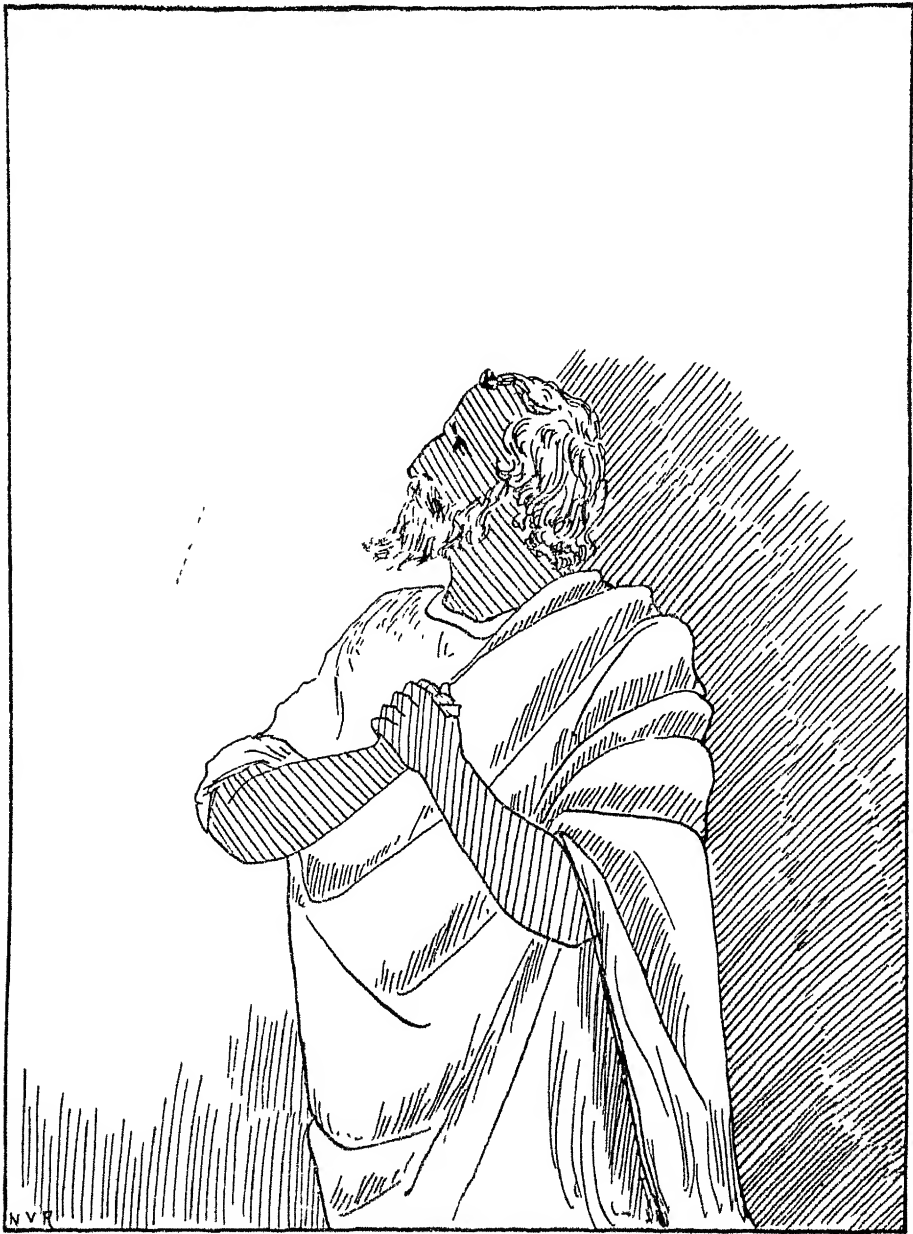
OTH: (*To self*). Why did I marry? This honest creature Iago, doubtless, sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

IAGO. [Returning]. My lord, I would, I might entreat your Honour to scan this thing no further; leave it to time. Although 'tis fit that Cassio have his place,—for, sure he fills it up with great ability,—yet, if you please to hold him off awhile, you shall by that perceive him and his means:²³ note if your lady strain his entertainment²⁴ with any strong or vehement importunity;²⁵ much will be seen in that. In the meantime, let me be thought too busy in my fears,—as worthy cause, I have to fear I am—and hold her free,²⁶ I do beseech your honour

OTH: Fear not my government.²⁷ [Exit Iago: Othello's reflections]

1. Dash'd your spirits disturbed your mind.
2. Mov'd agitated or disturbed.
3. Strain: stretch or unduly construe.
4. Grosser issues more wicked inferences.
5. Larger reach: wider scope i.e. Do not draw any wicked conclusions from or act on them; for, my words point to mere suspicion, not to proof.
6. Fall ...success: lead to vile results.
7. I do not think but. I think that.
8. Nature .itself: one going or acting against one's natural inclinations.
9. There's the point: that is just the thing.
10. Affect: like.
11. Degree rank.
12. Whereto. . . tends: which, according to our experience, is but natural for people to do.
13. Foh: an exclamation of contempt and disgust.
14. Smell detect.
15. A . . .rank: a most corrupt wish or desire.
16. Foul disproportion: horrible disagreement.
17. In position: in this place or connection.
18. Will discretion, desire.
19. Recoiling: reverting, going back to.
20. Fall to match: begin to compare.
21. Country forms: beautiful men of her country.
22. Happily. haply; i.e. perhaps.
23. Means. plans.
24. Strain his entertainment: press for his re-admission (to office).
25. Vehement importunity. excessive pressure or zeal.
26. Free innocent.
27. Fear.....government. do not fear or doubt that I will lose my self-control,

Othello,—suspecting and reflecting,—becomes a prey to conflicting emotions, and hence his bitter out-bursts against his wife and Marriage.



Sense Struggles but Passion Conquers.

(Pic. 30.)

OTHELLO'S MOURNFUL REFLECTIONS

His mistaken estimate of Iago's character and false suspicions of
Desdemona's Unchastity.

OTH: This fellow's of exceeding honesty, and knows all qualities,
with a learned spirit, of human dealings.¹

If I do prove her haggard,² though that her jesses³ were
my dear heart-strings, I'd whistle her off⁴ and let her down the
wind, to prey at fortune.⁵ Haply,⁶ for⁷ I am black, and have
not those soft parts of conversation⁸ that chamberers⁹ have;
or, for I am declin'd into the vale of years¹⁰—yet, that's
not much—she's gone; I am abus'd, and my relief¹¹ must be to
loathe her.

O curse of marriage, that we can call these delicate crea-
tures ours, and not their appetites!¹² I had rather be a toad,¹³
and live upon the vapour of a dungeon, than keep a corner in
the thing I love for others' uses.¹⁴ Yet, 'tis the plague of great
ones;¹⁵ prerogativ'd¹⁶ are they less than the base, 'tis destiny
unshunnable, like death.¹⁷ Even then this forked plague¹⁸ is fated
to us when we do quicken.¹⁹ [Desdemona, seen coming.]

1 And knows dealings: possessing a well-informed mind, (he) knows all qualities (i.e. the nature) of human dealings. 2. Haggard wasted, lean, wild, licentious. 3. Jesses. short straps of leather, tied about the foot of a hawk, by which the bird was leashed or held fast on the fist or forefinger of a falconer; when the hawk was flown to prey on some other bird, the jesses (with the bells, if any) were still fastened on the hawk's legs. "The falconers always let fly the hawk against the wind; if she flies with the wind behind her, she seldom returns. If therefore a hawk was, for any reason, to be dismissed, she was let down the wind, and from that time she never returned, but shifted for herself and preyed at fortune." 4. Whistle her off: let her go off, by unhooding her and making a whistling sound (which a tame hawk was taught to understand) 5. If I do.....fortune: the meaning is, if my wife proves faithless to me, I will discard her or throw her off to shift for herself, tho' she were, at one time, as dear to me as my heart-strings or heart, and tho' it may give me a heart-wrench to do so.) 6 Haply. perhaps. 7. For because. 8 Soft parts of conversation. qualities of polite or elegant talk and deportment. 9. Chamberers courtiers, men of intrigue, or wanton persons. 10. Declined .. .of years: advanced in years 11. Relief: satisfaction 12. O curse.....appetites how accursed or detestable is marriage (i.e. the institution or the custom of marriage) by which men control, or become the masters of, their wives, but not of their desires or lusts. 13. Toad a big frog, regarded as very loathsome and poisonous. 14. I had.....others' uses I would rather like to live like a toad hid underground and breathe the foul air of some hole than live like a man, loving and nourishing his wife but for others' use. 15. Yet, 'tis great ones still, the so called big people are cursed with this kind of life. 16 Prerogativ'd: privileged, enjoying certain rights not given to others. 17. 'Tis .. .like death It (this kind of life) is like our Fate as unavoidable as death. 18. This forked plague this cursed life of two persons joined in wedlock. 19. When.....quicken. from the time or age when we quicken, i. e. ripen or develop into the stage of adolescence or youth

Othello feels faint, perplexed, and tortured, on seeing Desdemona,--the object of his suspicions.



"If she be false, O! then, Heaven mocks itself! I'll not believe it".....
And yet Doubt tortures him

(Pic. 31.)

OTHELLO SEES DESDEMONA AND BECOMES PERPLEXED.

OTH : Look ! where¹ she comes.

If she be false, O ! then, Heaven mocks itself.²

I'll not believe it.

[Enter Desdemona and Emilia.]

DES : How now, my dear Othello !

Your dinner, and the generous islanders³

By you invited, do attend⁴ your presence.

OTH : [*Speaking faintly*] I am to blame.

DES : Why do you speak so faintly ?

Are you not well ?

OTH : I have a pain upon my forehead here. [*Pourting to his head*]

DES : Faith, that's with watching⁵ ; 'twill away again .

Let me but bind it hard ; within this hour

It will be well.

OTH : Your napkin⁶ is too little [He puts the handkerchief from him.]

Let it alone Come, I'll go in with you.

(Desdemona takes up the handkerchief but drops it : and Emilia secretly picks it up.)

DES : I am very sorry that you are not well.

[Exit Othello and Desdemona.]

1 Where . there 2. If sheitself she cannot be false ; and, if she is, God who made her becomes a mockery. 3 Generous.....islanders : noble-men of this island. 4 Attend wait for. 5, That's with watching that is because you have kept yourself awake through watching. 6 Napkin : hand-kerchief.

Emilia finds Desdemona's handkerchief and Iago snatches it from her.



O, the Irony of Fate, that the good sometimes become the unconscious allies of the wicked !

(Pic. 32).

EMILIA FINDS THE HANDKERCHIEF: AND IAGO SNATCHES IT FROM HER.

EMI: I am glad I have found this napkin;
This was her first remembrance¹ from the Moor;
My wayward² husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd³ me to steal it; but she so loves the token,—
For, he conjur'd⁴ her she should ever keep it,—
That she reserves it evermore⁵ about her
To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,⁶
And give 't Iago.
What he will do with it, Heaven knows, not I;
I nothing⁷ but to please his fantasy.⁸

[Enter Iago.]

IAGO. How now! what do you here alone?

EMI. Do not you chide;⁹ I have a thing for you.

IAGO. A thing for me? It is a common thing—

EMI. Ha!

IAGO: To have a foolish wife.

EMI. O! is that all? What will you give me now
For that same handkerchief?

IAGO: What handkerchief?

EMI. What handkerchief!

Why, *that* the Moor first gave to Desdemona:
That which so often you did bid me steal

IAGO. Hast stol'n it from her?

EMI: No, faith; she let it drop by negligence,
And, to the advantage,¹⁰ I, being there, took 't up.
Look, here it is.

IAGO: A good wench;¹¹ give it me.

EMI: What will you do with 't, that you have been so earnest
To have me filch¹² it?

IAGO. Why, what's that to you?¹³

[Snatches it.]

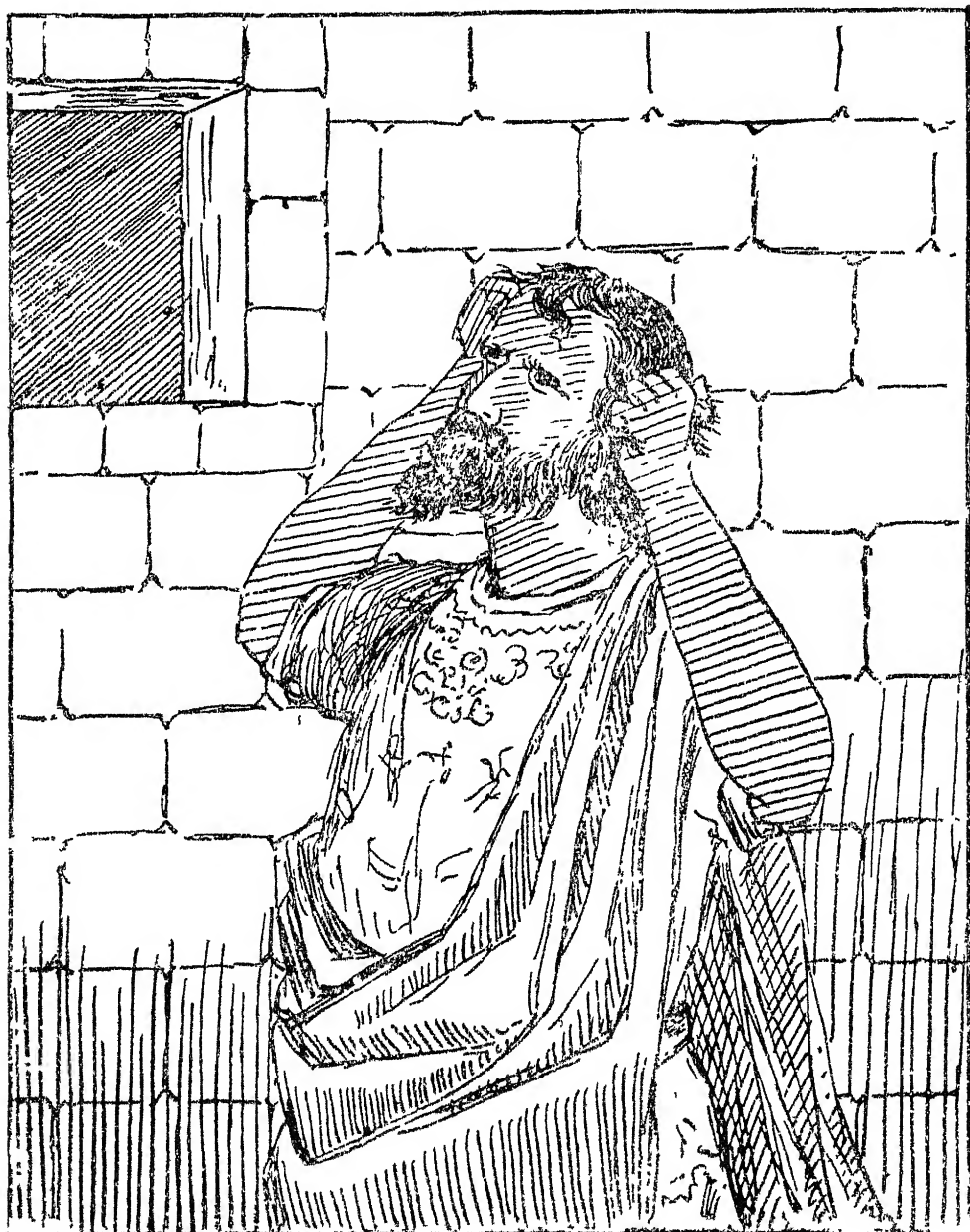
EMI: If it be not for some purpose of import give 't me again;
poor lady! she'll run mad when she shall lack¹⁴ it.

IAGO: Be not acknown on 't;¹⁵ I have use for it. Go leave me.
(Exit Emilia.) I will in Cassio's lodging lose¹⁶ this napkin, and let
him find it.

'Tis a trifle.¹⁷.....

1. Remembrance. token of love. 2. Wayward: erratic or obstinate.
3. Wooed: coaxed. 4. Conjur'd: implored or requested. 5. Reserves it ever-
more: keeps it all the more carefully. 6. Taken out: imitated or copied.
7. I nothing: I do nothing. 8. Fantasy: fancy. 9. Chide: rebuke or scold.
10. To the advantage: just in time; or as opportunity or luck would have it.
11. Wench: girl. 12. Filch: steal. 13. What is...you: it is no business of
yours (to question me). 14. Lack: miss or feel the absence of. 15. Be not
acknown on 't: do not acknowledge it, do not say anything about it (to others);
(i.e.) pretend ignorance about it. 16. Lose: drop. 17. Trifle: a small and
insignificant thing.

Continually haunted and tortured by Jealousy, Othello raves and bids a pathetic farewell to the world



Trifles, light as air, are, to the Jealous, confirmations strong as proofs of Holy Writ.

(Pic. 33).

HOW JEALOUSY FEEDS ON TRIFLES AND TORTURES ITS VICTIM.

IAGO : (*To Self*) But trifles, light as air, are, to the jealous, confirmations¹ strong, as proofs of holy writ.² This may do something. The Moor already changes with my poison : dangerous conceits³ are in their natures poisons, which at the first are scarce found to distaste⁴ but, with a little act upon the blood,⁵ burn like the mines of sulphur.⁶ Look, where he comes ! Not poppy, nor mandragora,⁷ nor all the drowsy syrups of the world, shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep which thou ow'dst⁹ yesterday ? (*Enter Othello, distressed*).

OTH : Ha ! ha ! false to me ?

IAGO : Why, how now, General ! no more of that.

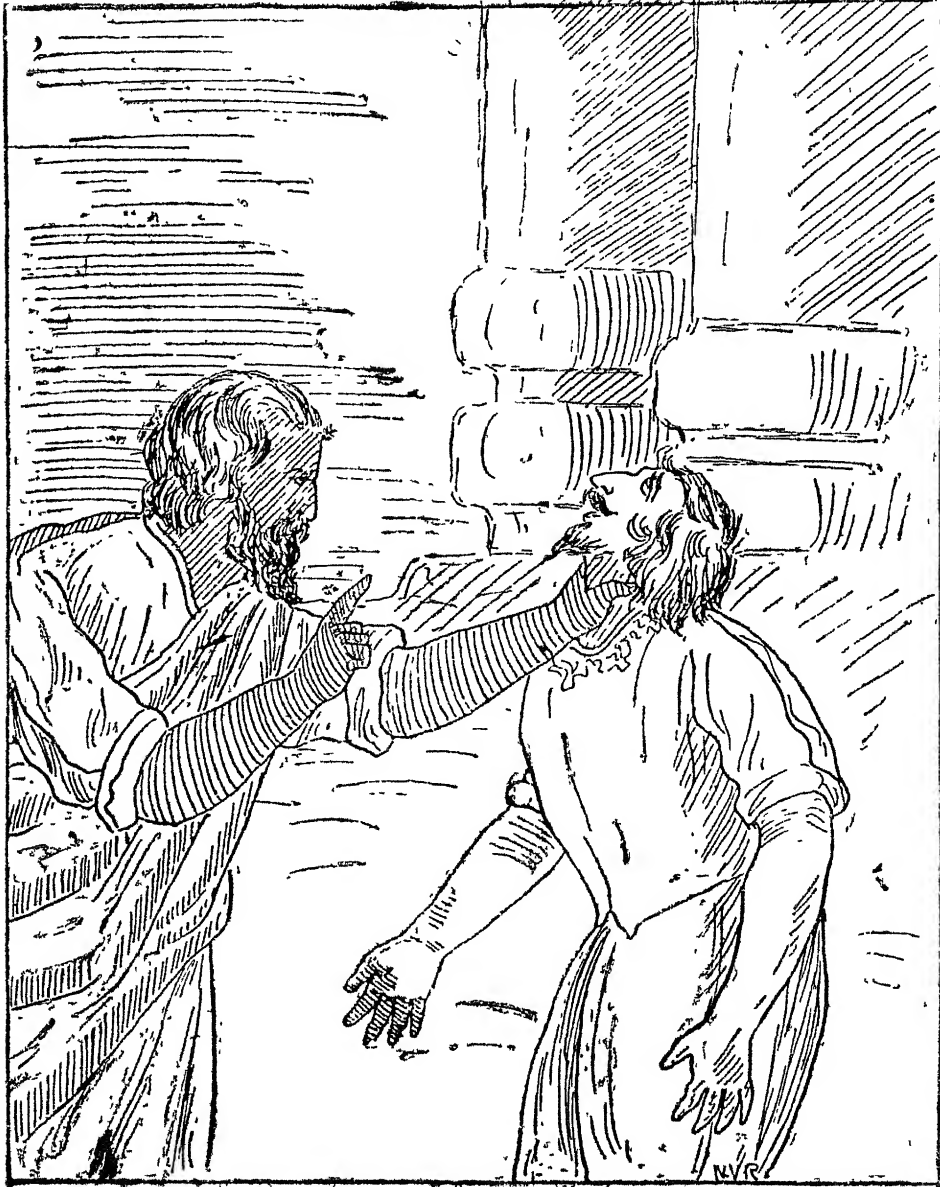
OTH : Avaunt !¹⁰ be gone ! thou hast set me on the rack ;¹¹ I swear 'tis better to be much abus'd than but to know 't a little¹² * * * What sense¹³ had I of her stol'n hours of lust¹⁴ ? I saw 't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me ; I slept the next night well, was free and merry ; I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips . he that is robb'd, not wanting what is stol'n, let him not know 't, and he's not robb'd at all.

IAGO : I am sorry to hear this.

OTH : I had been¹⁵ happy, if the general camp, pionsers and all, had tasted her sweet body, so¹⁶ I had nothing known. [*His Pathetic Farewell,*] O, now, for ever farewell¹⁷ the tranquil mind ! farewell content ! farewell the plumed troop¹⁸ and the big wars that make ambition virtue !¹⁹ O, farewell ! farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,²⁰ the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,²¹ the royal banner, and all quality²²,—pride, pomp, and circumstance²³,—of glorious war ! And, O you mortal engines,²⁴ whose rude throats the immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,²⁵ farewell ! Othello's occupation's gone !

1. Confirmations : things that confirm the truth ; proofs. 2. Holy writ, holy writings, the Bible. 3. Dangerous conceits : horrible ideas, suspicions. 4. Scarce.....distaste . hardly distasteful, i.e. agreeable, pleasant. 5. With . . . blood when they affect the blood a little. 6. Burn ...sulphur produce a burning sensation as intensely as mines of sulphur on fire. 7. Mandragora a herb like poppy, growing in Southern Europe, used as a drug for inducing sleep. 8. Sweet . peaceful. 9. Ow'dst : owned, had. 10. Avaunt : get away. 11. Set.... rack placed me on the rack,—an instrument of torture, tortured me with your suspicions. 12. 'Tis .. little : it is better to be much abused or wronged (with a full knowledge of that wrong) than to know it partly and be in suspicion and suspense. 13. Sense . knowledge. 14. Stol'n hours of lust : secret misconduct. 15. Had been would have been. 16. So : and. 17. Farewell . good-bye to. 18. The plumed troop soldiers with helmets having feathers on. 19. Make ambition virtue : convert even inordinate ambition,—a vice,—into a virtue. 20. Trump : trumpet. 21. Fife : pipe. 22. All quality . all other characteristics or things. 23. Circumstance the reality (as opposed to mere emblems like those mentioned above.) 24. Mortal engines deadly cannons. 25. Whose rude... counterfeit whose terrible mouths imitate the fearful thunders (supposed to be) hurled by the God Jupiter. (N. B.—Othello, disgusted and disappointed with Desdemona, is now determined to give up his military life that he loved so well).

Othello, full of resentment and wrath, highly tensed and excited, seizes Iago by the throat and demands proofs of his wife's infidelity.



“Villain! be sure, thou prove my Love a whore.....If thou dost slander her and torture me, never pray more.”

OTHELLO'S WRATHFUL EXPLOSION

IAGO : Is it possible, my Lord?

OTH : Villain ! be sure thou prove my love¹ a whore,²

[Seizing him by the throat.

Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;³
Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul,⁴
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog⁵
Than answer my wak'd wrath.⁶

IAGO : Is 't come to this ?⁷

OTH . Make me to see 't ; or, at the least, so prove it,
That the probation⁸ bear no hinge nor loop
To hang a doubt on ;⁹ or woe upon thy life !¹⁰

IAGO : My noble lord,—

OTH If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more ;¹¹ abandon all remorse ;¹²
On horror's head horrors accumulate ;¹³
Do¹⁴ deeds to make Heaven weep, all earth amaz'd ;¹⁵
For, nothing canst thou to damnation¹⁶ add
Greater than that.¹⁷ [Iago looks injured and appeals to Heaven.

1. Love · object of my love ; my wife. 2. Whore : a loose woman
3. Ocular · of an eye-witness, visible. 4. By ... soul if my immortal soul
is worth anything ; or by all the sanctity of my immortal soul ; (this is a form of
swearing, equal to 'by my soul') 5. Thou ... dog : prose order is, 'It would
have been better, if thou hadst been born a dog' 6. 'Thou hadst.....wrath' you
would have been safer as a dog than as a man answerable to my anger that has
been roused (by you). This means, either satisfy me, or I will kill you in my
anger. 7. Is . this has it come to this result ? Is it all going to end in
this result, in my being killed ? 8 Probation · proof. 9. Bear....on have no
support or cause for being doubted any further, prove it beyond any reasonable
doubt, i.e the proof should be convincing and leave no room for doubt in my
mind. (Hinge that which supports the door, 'Loop' is a hole through which
something can be hung). 10. Woe upon thy life death and destruction will
befall thee. 11 Never pray more . never pray any more for your life ; i.e. no
amount of your praying will save your life ; for, I shall surely kill you.
12 Abandon all remorse · give up all feeling ; have no more love of life ; that is,
be prepared to die ('Remorse' usually means 'the prickings of conscience' ;
also, pity ; here, it means, pity or feeling for oneself). 13. On.....accumulate ·
your one terrible deed leads to another you will be gathering 'Horrors upon
horrors.' 14. Do you are doing or have done. 15. Do.....amaz'd ; you are
committing such wicked deeds as would move even the gods to tears and make
human beings awe-struck. 16. To damnation to (her) condemnation or slander
17. The meaning of the line is because, you have already so much stained or
spoiled her character that there is nothing further to be added to it ; that is, you
have already said the wickedest thing about her.

Iago, with an air of injured love and innocence, appeals to Heaven. Othello, disarmed and taken in, yields and swears revenge.



How the Devil plays the Patron Saint of Honesty, Love and Innocence and the Guardian Angel or Custodian of his Victim's interests!

(Pic. 35).

IAGO'S CONSUMMATE DEVILRY IN HIS PRETENCE OF INNOCENCE AND
HONESTY, ALSO, IN HIS OFFER OF PROOFS, Etc.

IAGO: (*To Self*) O Grace! O Heaven, forgive me!
Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?
God be wi' you;¹ take mine office. O wretched fool!
That liv'st to make thine honesty a vice!²
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world!
To be direct³ and honest is not safe
(*To Oth.*) I thank you for this profit,⁴ and, from hence
I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence⁵.

OTH: Nay, stay; thou shouldst be honest.⁶

IAGO: I should be wise; for, honesty's a fool and loses that it
works for.⁷

OTH: (*Perplexed*) By the world,⁸
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not.
I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh⁹
As Dian's visage,¹⁰ is now begrim'd¹¹ and black
As mine own face. If there be¹² cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it.¹³ Would, I were satisfied!¹⁴

IAGO: I see, sir, you are eaten up¹⁵ with passion.
I do repent me that I put it to you¹⁶
You would be satisfied?¹⁷

OTH: Would! nay, I will.¹⁸

1. God.....you: let God defend you. 2. To make ..vice: to be so straight-forward or bluntly honest as to be unpleasant to others. (Iago is here controverting the general moral sentiment that 'Honesty is the best policy'). 3. Direct: straight-forward. 4. Profit: profitable lesson or good return from you. 5. Love.....offence: affection leads to such unpleasantness. (similar to 'familiarity breeds contempt') 6. Thou... ..honest: you must be thoroughly honest, and hide nothing from me. (This is said in the belief that Iago is keeping back something). 7. Honesty's ...for: to be honest is to be foolish, for (I find) that honesty (by its openness) does not succeed in its object. 8 By the world: in the name of all that this world contains, this is a form of swearing. 9. Fresh: free from blemish. 10. Dian's visage: the face of Diana, a goddess of the ancient Romans famed for her beauty and chastity and guarding the honor of females. 11. Begrim'd: soiled. 12. If there be: if these lead to; (that is, if these suspicions are to have the same effect as, etc.) 13. I'll ...it: I will not continue to bear it (i.e.) the suffering caused by the state of suspense; this means, I will at once decide to act. 14. Would.....satisfied: I wish I would be satisfied (once for all). 15. Eaten up: consumed. 16 I do.. ..you: I am sorry I put the idea into you. 17. You.....satisfied? Would you be satisfied? is it your wish that you must be satisfied? 'Would' here means 'wish'. 18. Wouldwill: It is not only my wish, but my determination (to be satisfied).

IAGO : And may,¹ but, how ? how satisfied,² my lord ?
 Would you,³ the supervisor,³ grossly gape on ?⁴
 Behold her tupp'd⁵

OTH : Death and damnation ! O !⁶

IAGO : It were a tedious⁷ difficulty, I think, to bring them to that prospect ;⁸ damn them then, if ever mortal eyes do see them bolster more than their own⁹ What then ? How then ? What shall I say ? Where's satisfaction ? It is impossible you should see this, were they as prime¹⁰ as goats, as hot¹¹ as monkeys, as salt¹² as wolves in pride,¹³ and fools as gross as ignorance made drunk.¹⁴ But yet, I say, if imputation¹⁵ and¹⁶ strong circumstances,¹⁷—which lead directly to the door of truth,—will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.

OTH : Give me a living reason¹⁸ she's disloyal.

IAGO I do not like the office;¹⁹ but, sith²⁰ I am enter'd in this cause so far,²¹ prick'd²² to 't by foolish honesty and love, I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately and, being troubled with a raging tooth,²³ I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul²⁴ that in their sleeps will mutter their affairs; one of this kind is Cassio. In sleep I heard him say, 'Sweet Desdemona, let us be wary,²⁵ let us hide our loves !' And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand, cry,—'O, sweet creature !' and then kiss me hard, as if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots, that grew upon my lips;²⁶ then laid his leg over my thigh, and sigh'd, and kiss'd; and then cried, 'Cursed fate, that gave thee to the Moor !'

1. May . quite possible. 2. How satisfied : in what manner or to what extent do you seek to be satisfied ? 3. The Supervisor the on-looker or the sight-seer. 4. Grossly gape on without shame look on. 5. Would you..... tupp'd? Is it your wish that you should shamelessly see with your own eyes your wife lying with another man? 6. Death and damnation, O ! . then, I am damned or ruined. (Othello wanted an ocular proof, but when Iago convinces him of the impossibility of actually seeing the proof, Othello curses himself). 7. Tedious very great; insurmountable. 8. Prospect : result; condition. 9. Damn..... own they will ruin themselves if ever they allow others to see them lying together. The prose order is, 'Damn them then, if ever mortal eyes, more (i. e. other) than their own, do see them bolster.' 'Bolster.' i. e. with heads on the same pillow 10. Prime : forward; impetuous. 11. Hot : Passionate. 12. Salt : lustful. 13. In pride : in full vigour. 14. Fools.....drunk as fools made more passionate under the influence of drink. 15. Imputation : inference. 16. And . together with. 17. Circumstances other events having the force of evidence producing satisfaction (circumstantial evidence) 18. Living reason : strong and direct proof ; (i. e. proof based on fact and experience of life, and not on mere conjecture or suspicion.) 19. The office : this (kind of) work. 20. Sith : since. 21. I am.....far . I have gone so far in this affair. 22. Prick'd : urged or induced strongly. 23. Raging : paining. 24. Loose of soul; Licentious in (their) nature. 25. Wary : careful. 26. As if.....lips . that is, he imprinted his kisses so warmly, as if he were sucking them up (which looked like plucking up plants by their roots).

OTH : O monstrous ! monstrous !

IAGO : Nay, this was but his dream.

OTH . But this denoted a foregone conclusion :¹
 'Tis a shrewd doubt,² though it be but a dream

IAGO : And this may help to thicken other proofs
 That do demonstrate thinly.³

OTH . I'll tear her all to pieces.

IAGO . Nay, but be wise ; yet we see nothing done ;
 She may be honest yet. Tell me but this
 Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
 Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?

OTH : I gave her such a one ; 'twas my first gift.

IAGO . I know not that ; but such a handkerchief—
 I am sure it was your wife's—did I to-day
 See Cassio wipe his beard with.

OTH : If it be that,—

IAGO : If it be that, or any that was hers,
 It speaks against her with the other proofs.

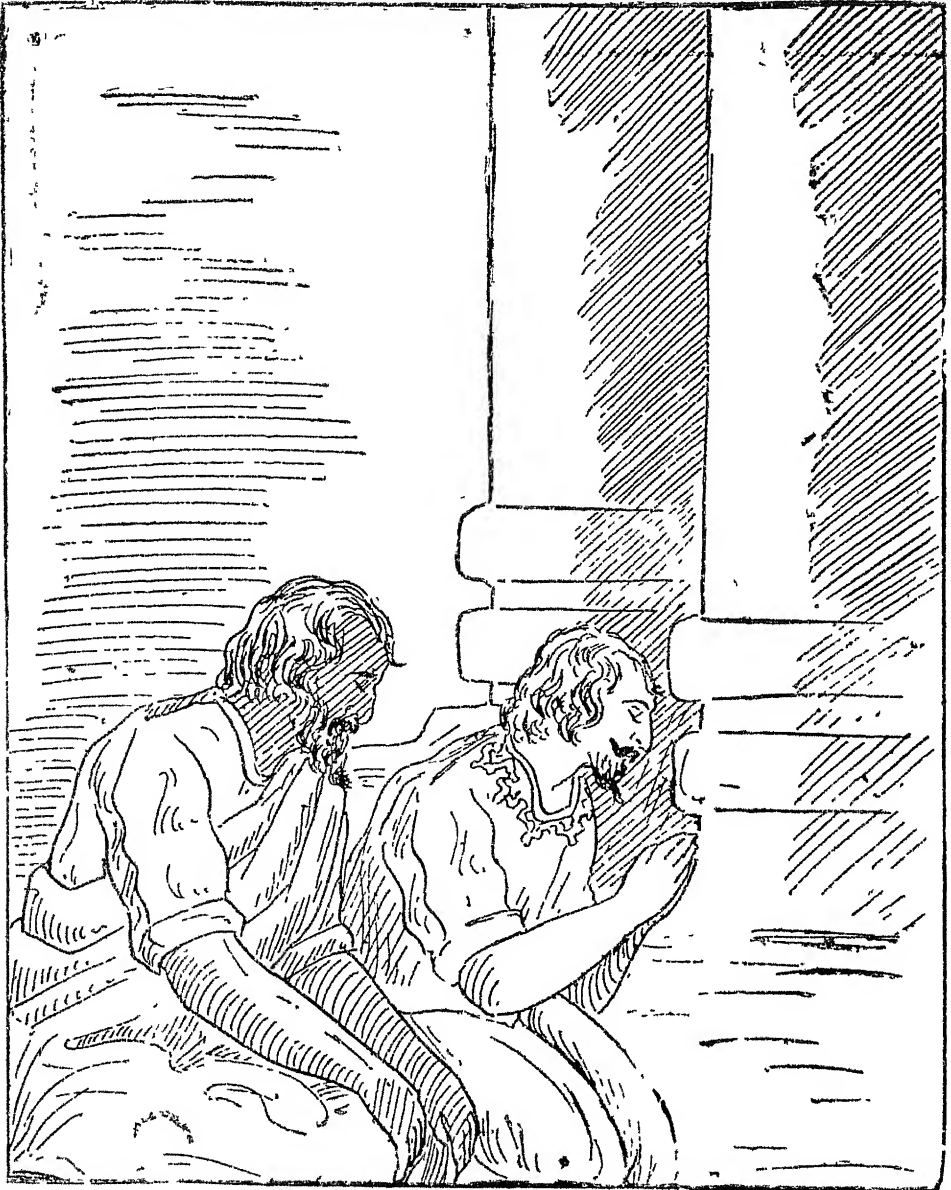
OTH : O ! that the slave had forty thousand lives !⁴
 One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
 Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago ;
 All my fond love thus (*throwing out his hands*) do I blow to Heaven :⁵
 'Ts gone.
 Arise, black Vengeance, from the hollow hell !⁶
 Yield up,⁷ O love ! thy crown and hearted throne⁸
 To tyrannous⁹ hate. Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,¹⁰
 For 'tis of aspics¹¹ tongues !

IAGO . Yet, be content.

OTH : O ! blood, blood, blood !

1. A foregone conclusion : the result of an already established fact ; a fore-
 seen or expected result. 2. Shrewd doubt sensible or well-grounded suspicion.
 3. To thicken.....thinly . To strengthen other proofs each of which by itself would
 be considered slender. 4. O ! that.....lives : O ! I wish the slave (Cassio) had,
 not one, but forty thousand (i.e. many) lives (for me to kill him as many times).
 5. Blow to heaven scatter to the winds. 6. Hollow hell deep hell 7. Yield
 up : give up. 8. Crownthrone all your most precious and dearest possessions.
 such as the crown and throne so deeply fixed in the heart. 9. Tyrannous : cruel.
 10. Fought . freight or burden. 11. Aspics' i.e. of the asp, a poisonous serpent.

Othello kneels and swears revenge, and Iago also kneels and swears help to 'wronged' Othello.



Alas! when Revenge over-powers Reason, what havoc is done to us and others by our evil emotions!

OTHELLO SWEARS REVENGE, AND IAGO DRIVES HOME HIS ADVANTAGE.

IAGO : Patience, I say ; your mind, perhaps, may change.

OTH : Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,¹ —whose icy current² and compulsive course³ ne'er feels retiring ebb,⁴ but keeps due on⁵ to the Propontic and the Hellespont,⁶ even so my bloody⁷ thoughts, with violent pace,⁸ shall ne'er look back,⁹ ne'er ebb¹⁰ to humble love, till that a capable and wide¹¹ revenge swallow them up.¹² (Kneels.) Now, by yond marble heaven,¹³ in the due reverence of a sacred vow,¹⁴ I here engage my words.¹⁵

IAGO : Do not rise yet. (Kneels.) Witness,¹⁶ you ever-burning¹⁷ lights above ! You elements that clip¹⁸ us round about ! witness, that here Iago doth give up the execution of his wit, hands, heart, to wrong'd Othello's service !¹⁹ Let him command, and to obey shall be in me remorse, what bloody business ever.²⁰ [Both rise

OTH : I greet thy love,²¹ not with vain²² thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,²³ and will upon the instant put thee to 't²⁴ within these three days, let me hear thee say that Cassio's not alive.

IAGO : My friend is dead ;²⁵ 'tis done at your request. But let her live.

OTH : Damn her, lewd minx !²⁶ O, damn her ! Come, go with me apart : I will withdraw,²⁷ to furnish me with²⁸ some swift means of death for the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.²⁹

IAGO : I am your own for ever.

[Exit

1. The Pontic Sea : the Black Sea. 2. Icy current : flow of cold water. 3. Compulsive course : current forcibly moving onward. 4. Ne'er ... ebb never falls low or goes back (as tidal rivers do). 5. Due on : right or straight on. 6. The Propontic and the Hellespont : the Sea of Marmora and the Strait of Dardanelles. 7. Bloody : revengeful. 8. With violent pace rapidly moving or rushing onwards. 9. Look back pause to think over. 10. Ebb go down or stoop. 11. Capable and wide : irresistible and comprehensive. 12. Like ... them up : as the cold currents of the Black Sea always keep flowing only onwards till they mingle with (or get merged into) the Sea of Marmora and the Strait of Dardanelles, so my revengeful thoughts shall rush on without pause till they end in wreaking a terrible vengeance. 13. By.....heaven in the name of yonder (or that) clear sky. 14. In the.....vow with due regard to the sanctity of my vow. 15. Engage my words : make a solemn promise. 16. Witness be witness to (i. e. ye Stars etc., be witness to) my words or vow. 17. Ever-burning lights : ever-shining stars. 18. Clip : surround. 19. Iago doth.....service : Iago (hereby promises) to employ his, etc. 20. Let himever it is for him to command, and for me to obey in all conscience, however bloody or cruel the work may be (that is commanded by him). 21. Greet thy love : welcome or gratefully accept your loving service. 22. Vain : idle or formal. 23. With acceptance bounteous : i.e. accept freely and warmly. 24. And willto 't and will at once employ you for it. 25. My.....dead my friend may be taken as dead. 26. Lewd minx : loose woman. 27. I will withdraw : I shall retire (to be alone). 28. To furnish me with : to think and decide upon. 29. My lieutenant : truly, now, etc.

On the loss of the Handkerchief; the scene between Othello and Desdemona.



Fear and Superstition blow out the lamp of Reason and leave us in the dark.

(Pic 37).

SCENE IV.—BEFORE THE CASTLE.

OTHELLO AND DESDEMONA, ON THE LOSS OF THE HANDKERCHIEF.

DES . Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia ?

EMI : I know not, madam.

DES . Believe me, I had¹ rather have lost my purse full of cruza-
does.² and, but³ my noble Moor is true of mind and made of no
such baseness as jealous creatures are, it were enough to put
him to ill thinking.⁴

EMI . Is he not jealous ?

DES . Who, he ? I think the sun, where he was born, drew all
such humours from him⁵

EMI : Look ! where he comes.

DES I will not leave him now till Cassio be call'd⁶ to him. [Enter Oth.]
How is 't with you, my lord ?

OTH . Well, my good lady. [Aside] O ! hardness to dissemble.⁷
How do you, Desdemona ?

DES Well, my good lord.

OTH Give me your hand [Taking her hand] This hand is moist,⁸
my lady.

DES . It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.

OTH . This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart,⁹ hot, hot and
moist;¹⁰ this hand of yours requires a sequester¹¹ from liberty,
fasting and prayer, much castigation,¹² exercise devout,¹³ for
here's a young and sweating¹⁴ devil here, that commonly
rebels.¹⁵ 'Tis a good hand, a frank one.¹⁶

DES . You may, indeed, say so ; for, 'twas that hand that gave
away my heart.¹⁷

OTH : A liberal hand ; the hearts of old gave hands, but our new
heraldry is hands not hearts.¹⁸

DES : I cannot speak of this.¹⁹ Come now, your promise.

1 Had would. 2 Cruzadoes : valuable coins. 3 But : if it had not
been for the fact that. 4 To put.....thinking. to make him suspicious. 5 The
sun.....him : in the hot country where he was born, the sun must have sucked
or dried up all the bad humours of his blood. (Desdemona means that Souther-
ners are more free and open than the Northerners living in colder and more
cloudy lands). 6 Call'd . reconciled 7. Hardness to dissemble difficult to hide
and pretend. 8. Moist . damp, (or, bad smelling through perspiration) indicating
some foulness. 9. This argues .. heart this indicates a mind that is (wantonly)
free and open (with others). 10. Hot, hot and moist very passionate and lusty.
11. Sequester a check or restraint. 12. Castigation beating and correcting.
13. Exercise devout: devotional work or duty 14 Sweating: perspiring (refer-
ring to 'moist', noted above). 15. Commonly rebels generally turns against
(the lawful authority of her husband). 16. 'Tis .. one said ironically. 17. My
heart: my love (to you). 18 The hearts... hearts. in old days people gave hands,
(or married) out of hearts (or love), but now, people simply marry but not
through love. (Heraldry. the practice among aristocrats of exhibiting their
family dignities by means of symbols, such as hands, hearts, arms etc.). 19. I
cannot speak of this: I cannot much understand this kind of talk.

OTH What promise, chuck ?¹

DES : I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

OTH I have a salt and sorry rheum² offends me. Lend me thy handkerchief.

DES . Here, my lord. [offers one]

OTH : That which I gave you.

DES : I have it not about me.

OTH : Not ?

DES No, indeed, my lord.

OTH : That is a fault. That handkerchief did an Egyptian to my mother give ; she was a charmer³ and could almost read the thoughts of people ; she told her, while she kept it, 'twould make her amiable and subdue my father entirely to her love : but, if she lost it or made a gift of it, my father's eye should hold her loathed,⁴ and his spirits⁵ should hunt after new fancies.⁶ She, dying gave it me , and bade me, when my fate would have me wive,⁷ to give it her. I did so and take heed on 't ; make it a darling, like your precious eye ; to lose 't or give 't away, were such perdition⁸ as nothing else could match.⁹

DES : Is 't possible ?

OTH : 'Tis true ; there's magic in the web¹⁰ of it a sibyl,¹¹ that had number'd in the world the sun to course two hundred compasses,¹² in her prophetic fury¹³ sew'd the work ; the worms were hallow'd¹⁴ that did breed the silk, and it was dy'd in mummy¹⁵ which the skilful conserv'd of maidens' hearts.¹⁶

DES : Indeed ! is 't true ?

OTH : Most veritable ; therefore, look to 't well.

DES : Then, would to God that I had never seen it !

OTH : Ha ! wherefore ?

DES : Why do you speak so startingly and rash ?

OTH : Is 't lost ? is 't gone ? speak, is it out o' the way ?

DES : Heaven bless us !

1. Chuck. chick or chicken ; a term of endearment (here used ironically .)
2. Salt .. rheum salt : not of a good taste, therefore unpalatable or unplea-
sant ; sorry. distressing, unpleasant and distressing pain. 3. Charmer : magician.
4. Shouldloathed : would look on her with disgust. 5. Spirits : affec-
tions. 6. Should.....fancies would look for new women. 7. My fate
wive : my fate would lead me to have a wife ; (i. e. when I would marry).
8. Perdition : curse or misfortune. 9. Match : equal. 10. Web : texture.
11. Sibyl : a female fortune-teller. 12. That.....compasses : that lived two
hundred years. 13. Prophetic fury : rage with a knowledge of the coming
result. 14. The worms were hallowed : the very silkworms were holy.
15. Mummy : a mixture used in Egypt and other places for preserving dead
bodies. 16. Which... ..hearts : which cunning people used as a kind of
medicine for keeping young girls steady and sober.

OTH : Say you ?¹

DES : It is not lost ; but what. an² if it were ?

OTH : How !

DES : I say, it is not lost.

OTH : Fetch 't, let me see 't.

DES : Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now. 'This is a trick to put me³ from my suit : pray you, let Cassio be received again.

OTH : Fetch me the handkerchief ; my mind misgives.⁴

DES . Come, come ;

You'll never meet a more sufficient⁵ man.

OTH : The handkerchief !

DES : I pray, talk me of Cassio.

OTH : The handkerchief !

DES : A man that all his time

Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,⁶

Shar'd dangers with you,—

OTH : The handkerchief !

DES : In sooth, you are to blame⁷

OTH : Away !

[Exit

EMI . Is not this man jealous ?

DES . I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief;

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

EMI : 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man ;⁸

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food ;⁹

They eat us hungerly and, when they are full,¹⁰

They belch¹¹ us. Look you ! Cassio and my husband

[Enter Iago and Cassio.]

IAGO . There is no other way ; 'tis she¹² must do 't ;

And, lo ! the happiness !¹³ go and importune¹⁴ her.

[Cassio goes to Desdemona.]

1. Say you what do you say ? 2. An . and, (here it has no meaning used only for meter). 3. To put me : to put me off ; or, prevent me. 4. Misgives begins to doubt. 5. Sufficient . Sufficing for all purposes; full or complete, (i.e.) of integrity. 6. Hath.....love has prospered in lie) through your affectionate favour. 7. You are to blame. you are in the wrong (not Cassio). 8. It is man . one need not wait for a long time to know the character of a person. 9. They ...food . men use (women) as their food, (when they are hungry) This means, "that men are full of appetites to satisfy which they make use of us." 10. Full . satisfied. 11. Belch . discard or reject. 12. She: Desdemona. 13. The happiness . the good luck, (how lucky that she is here). 14. Importune . beg and press.

Desdemona takes a charitable view of Othello's behaviour and advises patience to Cassio ; while Emilia is looking on.



1. A charitable view, without a clear vision of the true cause, is folly and madness.
2. Is it wise to live in a Fool's Paradise ?

DESDEMONA ADVISES PATIENCE TO CASSIO,

As, alas!, her advocacy is not now in Tune.

DES: How, now, good Cassio! what's the news with you?

CAS: Madam, my former suit; I do beseech you that, by your virtuous means,¹ I may again exist,² and be a member³ of his love whom⁴ I, with all the office of my heart,⁵ entirely honour.⁶ I would not be delay'd. If my offence be of such mortal⁷ kind, that nor⁸ my service past, nor present sorrows, nor purpos'd merit in futurity,⁹ can ransom¹⁰ me into his love again, but,¹¹ to know so must be my benefit;¹² so,¹³ shall I clothe me in¹⁴ a forc'd content¹⁵ and shut myself up in¹⁶ some other course to fortune's alms.¹⁷

DES: Alas! thrice-gentle¹⁸ Cassio! my advocacy¹⁹ is not now in tune;²⁰ my lord is not my lord; nor should I know him, were he in favour as in humour alter'd.²¹ So help me, every spirit sanctified,²² as I have spoken for you all my best²³ and stood within the blank of his displeasure²⁴ for my free speech! You must awhile be patient. What I can do, I will; and more I will, than for myself I dare;²⁵ let that suffice you.

IAGO: Is my lord angry?

EMI: He went hence but now, and certainly in strange unquietness.²⁶

IAGO: Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon, when it hath blown his ranks into the air, and, like the devil, from his very

1. Virtuous means · gentle but effectual methods. 2. Exist · live (in peace and honor). 3. Member · object. 4. Love.....whom · affection which. 5. With heart: with its full function or force, i.e., whole-heartedly; (with all the office working with full force.) 6. Entirely honor · regard very highly. 7. Mortal · serious. 8. Nor: neither. 9. Nor... ..futurity: nor the good behaviour which I am determined to show in future. 10. Ransom · to get back a thing on payment of money; (here, it means, take back or restore.) 11. But · then. 12. To know.....benefit · It will be to my advantage to know it as settled, (rather than be in suspense.) 13. So · then; in that case. 14. Clothe me in · fit myself for, or, put myself in. 15. A forc'd content: a settled state of mind under necessity. 16. Shut.....in · fall into or take to. 17. To fortune's alms · To get whatever fortune or fate wills or gives. 18. Thrice-gentle · very gentle. 19. Advocacy · advocacy or pleading. 20. In tune · opportune or agreeable. 21. Nor should... alter'd · Prose order, Nor—him, if he were altered in favour as in humour. (Favour; countenance or face; As. or; Humour · temper.) The line means, I do not know if the change in him is only in his face (i.e. superficial or temporary,) or in his temper itself (i.e. permanent, due to some deep-seated or serious cause). 22. So.....sanctified · this is equal to, let God defend me. 23. As.....best: because I have spoken or pleaded on your behalf to the best of my ability. 24. Stood.....displeasure · stood within the range, field or inmost point of his anger (blank aim or point, i.e. almost incurred his anger.) 25. And more.....dare: And I will do (for you) more than I will venture to do for myself. 26. In strange unquietness · in an unusually disturbed state of mind.

arm, puff'd his own brother;¹—and, can he be angry? Something of moment,² then; I will go meet him; there's matter in 't indeed, if he be angry.

DES: I prithee, do so [Exit Iago.] Something, sure of State,—either from Venice, or some unhatch'd practice³ made demonstrable⁴ here in Cyprus to him,—hath puddled his clear spirit;⁵ and in such cases, men's natures wrangle with inferior things, though great ones are their object.⁶ 'Tis even so; for, let our finger ache, and it induces our other healthful members even to that sense of pain.⁷

Nay, we must think men are not gods, nor of them look for such observancy as fits the bridal!⁸ Beshrew⁹ me much, Emilia, I was,—unhandsome warrior as I am,—arraigning his unkindness with my soul;¹⁰ but now, I find I had suborn'd the witness, and he's indicted falsely.¹¹

EMI: Pray Heaven it be state-matters, as you think, and no conception, nor no jealous toy¹² concerning you.

DES: Alas the day! I never gave him cause.

EMI: But, jealous souls will not be answer'd so; they are not ever jealous for the cause, but jealous for they are jealous; 'tis a monster begot upon itself, born on itself.

DES: Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!

EMI: Lady, amen . . . [Exit all]

[Enter Bianca and Cassio.]

BIA: Save you,¹³ friend Cassio!

CAS: What make you from home¹⁴? How is it with you, my most fair Bianca? I' faith, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

BIA: And I was going to your lodging, Cassio. What! keep a week away? seven days and nights? eight score¹⁵ eight hours? and lovers' absent hours, more tedious than the dial eight score times? O weary reckoning!

1. I have . . . brother. I have seen him to be heroic and calm on the battlefield amidst cannon-shots doing havoc to his army and, like the devil, snatching his brother from his very arms and shattering him to pieces. 2. Moment: importance. 3. Unhatch'd practice: undisclosed or secret plotting. 4. Made demonstrable: made known or brought to light. 5. Puddled . . . spirit: muddled or muddled his (otherwise) clear mind. 6. Men's . . . Object: men's noble qualities aiming at higher things become mixed with base and unworthy objects. 7. Let our . . . pain: If one finger has a pain, it induces other healthy fingers (by sympathy) to feel that pain; (i.e.) it spreads the pain. 8. Nor . . . bridal. Prose order, 'Nor look of (from) them for such . . . This means,—we cannot expect men to be always as merry as on their wedding day. 9. Beshrew: curse. 10. I was . . . soul: I was all along blaming him with my soul, i.e. heartily for (what I thought) his unkindness; and in that, I was an unfair warrior (i.e. I attacked him wrongly). 'As' here has the force of 'that'. 11. I find . . . falsely: I now discover that I had been led by wrong impressions, and blamed him falsely. 12. Toy: fancy. 13. Save you. God save you. (This is a form of greeting). 14. What . . . home? What do you here from home? or why are you away from home? 15. Score: twenty. (To lovers, the time or absence is felt to be eight score times as great as the actual period).

CAS : Pardon me, Bianca; I have this while with leaden¹ thoughts been press'd; but I shall, in a more continue² time, strike off this score of absence.³ Sweet Bianca, [*Giving her Desdemona's handkerchief*] take me this work out.⁴

BIA : O Cassio, whence came this? This is some token from a newer friend; to the felt absence, now I feel⁵ a cause Is 't come to this? Well, well.

CAS Go to, woman! Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth⁶, from whence you have them You are jealous now that this is from some mistress,—some remembrance: no, by my faith, Bianca.

BIA : Why, whose is it?

CAS . I know not, sweet; I found it in my chamber. I like the work well. Ere it be demanded,—as like enough it will,⁷—I'd have it copied; take it, and do 't; and leave me for this time.

BIA : Leave you! wherefore?

CAS : I do attend here on⁸ the general; and think it no addition,⁹ nor my wish, to have him see me woman'd.¹⁰

BIA . Why, I pray you?

CAS : Not that I love you not.

BIA : But that you do not love me. I pray you, bring¹¹ me on the way a little; and say if I shall see you soon at night.

CAS : 'Tis but a little way that I can bring you; for, I attend here; but I'll see you soon.

BIA : 'Tis very good I must be circumstanc'd.¹² [Exit

1. *Leaden* · heavy or sorrowful 2. *Continue* · continuous, or not interrupted; i.e. peaceful. 3. *Strike . . . absence* cancel or make up for this incident or time of absence. 4. *Take out* take out (or copy) this work for me 5. *Feel* · find or discover. 6. *Throw.. teeth* cast away your wicked fancies to the devil, or, scatter them to the winds. 7. *As... ..will.* and it is very likely it will (be demanded). 'As' means 'and.' 8. *Attend . . . on.* wait.....for. 9. *Addition* : additional virtue or honor. 10. *Woman'd* · with a woman. 11. *Bring* accompany. 12. 1. . .circumstanc'd I must adjust myself to the circumstances.

A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF ACT III.

No new persons are introduced in this act, nor are its scenes and incidents many.

PART I

THE CHIEF EVENTS DESCRIBED IN THIS ACT.

1. Cassio, as previously advised by Iago, (Act II.) seeks for and obtains through the assistance of Emilia, a private interview with Desdemona. She promises to get him back his lost place by pleading with Othello on his behalf, and assures him of her full sympathy and help thus,—

Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

If I do avow a friendship, I'll perform it
To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience;
His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
I'll intermingle everything he does
With Cassio's suit; therefore be merry.

In the meantime, Othello, who has gone to inspect the works on the fortification, returns with Iago. Cassio, evidently feeling nervous and ashamed to face Othello, takes his leave of Desdemona and wants to withdraw from the scene. And when Desdemona asks him to stay and hear her speak on his behalf, he replies, 'I'm very ill at ease, unfit for mine own purpose,' and departs.

2. Seeing Cassio going away quietly, Iago makes this wicked remark,—'*Ha! I like not that.*' And Othello, also observing Cassio from a distance, questions Iago, 'Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?'. Iago gives a purposely false, negative reply, saying

No, sure, I can not think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.

3. While Othello and Iago are talking, Desdemona comes in. She strongly pleads to Othello on behalf of Cassio and asks with a rather childish persistency whether his restoration will be 'shortly'; 'to night at supper'; if not,—

Why, then, to-morrow night; or Tuesday morn;
On Tuesday noon, or night; on Wednesday morn;
I prithee, name the time; but let it not
Exceed three days; in faith, he's penitent.

For all her importunity, Othello who, as the Governor of the place, has to be politic, merely replies, 'not now, some other time.'

She still persists and reminds him of the tender incident when—

Michael Cassio came a-wooing with you,
And so many a time hath tak'n your part,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly.

Othello seems to melt ; or, to quiet her in her importunities, says,—'Prithee, no more ; let him come when he will, I will deny thee nothing'. But in order to reflect on the situation, he asks her to 'grant me this,—to leave me but a little to myself.' Desdemona cheerfully obeys and retires with Emilia, saying—

Be as your fancies teach you ;
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

4. Iago, who was all this time standing passive and watching the scene, now that both Desdemona and Emilia are gone, comes closer to Othello and begins his devilish work. By means of clever hints, halting expressions, and artful protestations of love and loyalty, and, as if prompted by his good name or reputation,—'the immediate jewel of our souls,'—he vaguely suggests to Othello that Desdemona's familiarity with Cassio is rather suspicious. He instils the poison of jealousy into Othello's mind and leaves him rather restless, in a mood of doubt. And yet, so dexterous and artful have been Iago's speech, implications and conduct that, when he departs, Othello entertains a very high opinion of him,—of his exceeding honesty and knowledge of all types of human dealings. To use Othello's own words,—

This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealings.

5. Subsequently, Desdemona comes to Othello and reminds him of his dinner for which 'the generous islanders, by you invited, do attend your presence.' Othello expresses his sorrow for having made them wait. She observes a faintness in his voice and, learning that it is due to a bad headache, tries to bind his forehead with a napkin, which she takes out of her pocket. But, Othello says, 'Your napkin is too little ; let it alone ;' and puts it off from him. She takes it up but, in the confusion of the moment, drops it, forgets all about it, and follows Othello when he says,—

Come, I'll go in with you.

6. But Emilia, who is there, knows the worth of that handkerchief and picks it up, saying—

I am glad I have found this napkin :
This was her first remembrance from the Moor :
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it ; but she so loves the token,—

For he conjured her she should ever keep it,—
That she reserves it ever more about her
To kiss and talk to.

Emilia takes it with the intent of copying the work and giving the latter to him,—

I'll have the work ta'en out
And give 't Iago : what he will do with it
Heaven knows, not I ;
I nothing but to please his fantasy,

7. Just then, Iago appears on the scene and his wife tells him of the handkerchief,—‘that which so often you bid me steal’. In showing it to him, she asks him,—

What will you do with't, that you have been so earnest
To have me filch it.

But Iago snatches it from her and thinks it impertinent for his wife to question him about its use,—

Why, what's that to you ?

Emilia replies—

It't be not for some purpose of import,
Give't me again : poor lady, she'll run mad
When she shall lack it.

To this, Iago's answer is—‘Do not acknowledge the fact of finding it, nor say anything about it to others. I have use for it. Go, leave me.’

Soon after, Emilia goes away and Iago is left alone. He thinks of the wicked use he is going to make of this napkin,—

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,
And let him find it. 'T'rifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ ;`this may do something.

For, he knows, like a true Psychologist, that—

The Moor already changes with my poison :
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of sulphur.

8. Othello and Iago meet again. Othello, who is much agitated and troubled with his suspicions, but not quite convinced of the guilt of Desdemona, demands of Iago a ‘living, ocular proof,’ and threatens him with death,—

If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
Never pray more * * *

And, again, catching him by the throat, he bursts out in anger,—

Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ;
Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

O, by the worth of my eternal soul,
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
Than answer my waked wrath!

For, nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that (slander)

Iago, the consummate actor, pretends to be taken aback, mortified and pained, and thus cries out before Othello,—

O grace! O Heaven defend me!
Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?
God be wi' you; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That livest to make thine honesty a vice!
O monstrous world! take note, take note, O World,
To be direct and honest is not safe.
I thank you for this profit, and from hence
I'll love no friend, since love breeds such offence.

And again, in answer to Othello who asks him to stay, saying 'Thou shouldst be honest,' (i.e. open and not hide anything from me), Iago replies—

I should be wise; for honesty's a fool,
And loses that it works for.

Then, wavering between the conflicting emotions of assurance and doubt, of hope and despondency, Othello says,—

Would, I were satisfied!

To which Iago replies,—'But how? how satisfied, my lord?' Then, with protestations of his honesty and innocence, he points out that it is impossible to produce any direct proof,—impossible to see a man and a woman lying together,—

It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring them to that prospect....
It is impossible you should see this,
Even if they were as prime as goats and as hot as monkeys.

On the other hand, however, he promises to convince him by 'imputation and strong circumstances which lead directly to the door of truth'.

9. Othello consents to be satisfied with such circumstantial evidence. Iago tells him how Cassio, in his dream, blabbered out his love to Desdemona, wrung his (Iago's) hands while lying near by, ardently imprinted warm kisses on his (Iago's) lips, and ended by saying, 'Sweet Desdemona, let us be wary, let us hide our loves.' Othello is now influenced and cries out that, though it was all but a dream, it 'denoted a foregone conclusion.' Iago follows his opportunity and adds that he saw Cassio wiping his beard with a handkerchief, which he thought was Desdemona's, 'spotted with strawberries.....'

10. With this circumstantial evidence, Othello is now thoroughly convinced of her guilt. He is now all up with rage and jealousy, and cries out for black vengeance, for blood, and bloody thoughts, which 'shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love.' He kneels down and, 'by yond marble heaven, in the due reverence of a sacred vow' he makes his resolution for 'a capable and wide revenge.' Iago, who is standing by, also kneels and swears, in the name of 'the ever-burning lights above,to give the execution of his wit, hands, heart to wronged Othello's service.' He is only to be commanded and he will readily do 'what bloody business ever.' They exchange promises of mutual support, and agree that Iago must kill Cassio and Othello do away with Desdemona.

PART II.

THE KEY-NOTE OF THIS ACT.

Such are the incidents of this Act. Its importance, however, lies in the introduction of the second master-passion of the play and the way in which it is set in action. Hitherto, in previous Acts, secondary things—persons as well as events—have been detailed. The ground has so far been prepared, as it were, for the 'Dynamic Force' to burst and consume all.

The key-note of this Act is the unchecked sway of the Passion of Jealousy and the frightful results that flow from it. Othello, who was most unsuspecting, most loving to his wife, who was of a free and open nature,—generous, noble and patient,—is now under its blighting influence, changed into quite a different and deformed being. All his good qualities are inverted into their opposites. His love is turned to hate, affection to anger, nobility of heart to meanness or pettiness of feeling. His generous mind is changed to a revengeful spirit, while his patience yields to headlong hurry in thought and action. He becomes so much altered that even Lodovico, who meets him later, is struck with amazement and cries out,—

Is *this* the noble Moor whom our full Senate,
Call all-in-all sufficient? Is *this* the nature
Whom passion could not shake?

Othello is in the process of becoming a murderer, as he himself says, an 'honourable murderer.' It is to such a low level that he has sunk. And why? because he is caught in the meshes of Jealousy,—'the green-eyed Monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on.'

PART III.

The third Act may therefore be called 'The Passion Act'; as here are brought out, for the first time and far more clearly

than before, (A) the character of the person who instigates and works up the passion ; (B) the obstacles to be surmounted ; and (C) the favourable factors, utilised to their fullest extent by the master mind of the villain to work up that Passion to its highest pitch.

(A) THE CHARACTER OF IAGO WHO CREATES THE PASSION.

Iago is the man who creates the passion where it does not exist, works it up, so that it gathers volume and strength in its onward course, and never allows it to die or dwindle, fade or fall. He is the prime mover of the whole situation, and is fully equipped with the qualities necessary for it. He is young and supremely intelligent and resourceful. He is servicable to all. He is full of wisdom, and speaks words that are obviously reasonable, full of common-sense, and appropriate to the several and different persons and events. He appears trustworthy and becomes the trusted friend and guide to all. And there is none who does not look to him for help or advice, no event that does not need his guiding hand for its direction. The unanimous verdict of all who come in contact with him is, that he is ever 'the good and honest, the most honest, Iago.'

In truth, however, his intelligence is the most perverted ; the advice that he offers, and the help that he renders, are the outcome of an envious, malignant and utterly selfish nature. His keen intellect enables him, by a mere look or a slight acquaintance, to discover the weak points of others. He can turn and twist everything to serve, apparently, others' purposes but, in reality, his own. He knows how to take advantage of existing things, or to create fresh occasions to suit his ends, either by suggestion, insinuation or by open expression of certain thoughts, words and deeds. He cares not for the welfare of others, and, when he professes better or nobler sentiments of friendship, honesty, love or respect, it is only in furtherance of his dark and wicked plans. He makes friendship with others and keeps it up only so long as they would serve his purpose. Impelled by the burning, blighting passion of Envy, his one supreme object is revenge,—revenge for the wrongs (as he thinks) he has suffered at the hands of others. He believes he was purposely over-looked when the post of Lieutenantcy was filled up. He feels disappointed, and turns his spite and anger both against Othello who filled up the place and Cassio by whom it was so filled. To further fortify himself in his cause, he suspects, imagines, or invents the story, that both of them had misbehaved with his wife, Emilia. Hence, he must work up to 'wife for wife', by himself spoiling the chastity of Desdemona ; and, if this be impossible, he must at least bring about her death. And, to bring this about, he must make Othello, not only jealous of his wife but, at the same time, suffer all the torments of that evil passion.

He must tell him that she misbehaved with Cassio who is the most likely person to be suspected and implicated, as he has rather a free and open character for gaiety and courtesy and is therefore popular with women. This plan would at once spoil and shatter Othello's happiness, bring about the death of Desdemona, and possibly also that of Cassio. He therefore takes wicked advantage not only of Cassio's personal interview with Desdemona (which he himself has suggested and arranged for), but also of her rather importunate but innocent pleading with her husband for his (Cassio's) restoration. He construes these simple facts as the suspicious circumstances of their secret and illicit love. By clever suggestions, careful speeches, well-planned actions and indirect proofs, he manages to create and confirm in the mind of Othello a thorough conviction of his wife's unchastity, and causes him (Othello) to cry for the blood both of Desdemona, the seduced and of Cassio, the seducer. Iago so cleverly manages the affair that nobody has the faintest glimmer or the least idea of his real motive, of his villainous mind. He always appears to act for others in their own interests. He is ever 'the honest Iago'. But, underneath his honesty, he hides the worst devilry,—the most pitiless self-seeking. He is a supremely clear-headed, clever and intelligent rascal of the worst type,—being all intellect, brilliant, keen, full of analysis and insight, but prostituted to the service of a petty personal egotism,—to the satisfaction of only the meaner and baser instincts of a narrow, shivelled, and selfish soul.

(B) THE FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES IN THE WAY.

Evidently, two formidable circumstances stand against the success of his wicked plan. (1) One is the excessive love of Othello for his wife. 'His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,' that, for her sake, he would even renounce his 'baptism, all seals and symbols of redeemed sin'. In the very words of Othello,—'I do love thee; and when I love thee not, chaos is come again.' His attachment to her is so great that there is nothing which he will not give her or do for her. 'I will deny thee nothing', he says; and, for that reason, appears so much to yield to her that, as Iago would put it, 'she may make, unmake, and do what she list with him'. (2) The Second obstacle is that Othello is not an impetuous youth. He is a fully grown-up man who has reached mature manhood, and as he himself admits, 'declined in the vale of years.' Consequently, he is now past the follies, frivolities, and rash impulses of youth,—a sober, steady, firm and mature character. He has all along been a soldier, having, 'seen the cannon when it hath blown his ranks into the air and, like the devil, from his very arm puff'd his own brother.' Such an unshakable character cannot be made to entertain any jealousy, anger or hate, particularly against a person with whom he is bound by the strongest ties of real love. It is, for all practical purposes, an impossible task.

For, we see that Othello who has, by experience and training developed a capacity for self-restraint, and who proudly asserts 'fear not my Government (self-control)' is not the person to yield or be played upon so easily. He might even turn against and deal severely with all those that might question his character or light-heartedly speak of, or scandalise his wife. He demands of Iago 'ocular proof' in support of his allegations against Desdemona, failing which, he threatens him with dire consequences,— 'thou hadst been better have been born a dog than answer my waked wrath.'

(C) FAVOURABLE FACTORS FOR IAGO'S SUCCESS.

Against such obvious difficulties, however, must be set forth certain other factors that are favourable. (a) Iago is supremely clever, cautious, and resourceful. He is capable of giving advice that is probable and sound to 'thinking'. As testified to by Othello himself, he 'knows all qualities with a learned spirit of human dealings'. He is a deep and cunning villain who knows how to cover his villainy. He gloats over his capacity to do any villainy, under the garb of friendship, honesty, or service to others in these words,—

Divinity of Hell!

When devils will, the blackest sins, put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now....

(b) Added to this, he is much trusted by Othello. 'This fellow is of exceeding honesty'—is his settled opinion or conviction about Iago throughout; and, even when the latter imputes bad conduct to his much-loved wife (Desdemona), he has no more to say than to repeat his good opinion of him. 'I know', he says 'thou art full of love, and weighest thy words before thou givest them breath.' (c) The most important of all such helpful factors, however, is Othello's open and confiding nature itself. Though soldierly and straight-forward, he is very simple. He has not 'those soft parts of conversation which chamberers have.' He is ignorant of the doublings and duplicities, the trickeries and treacheries of the world and, being of a 'free and open nature,' he may, by a clever rogue like Iago, 'be as tenderly led by the nose as asses are.' (d) Besides, Othello's notions of human qualities are rather high; and, while he conducts himself, in strict accordance with ideals, he expects others also to behave likewise. (e) Then again, in spite of his steadiness, sobriety and self-control, Othello is, as Iago has found out, a man of extremes. He not only concludes quickly but acts quickly. His feelings and emotions are always strong, intense and excessive. He loves too much or hates too much. In his anger, he is irresistible, in his affection, he is unbounded; in his resolution he is inflexible. He is either extremely rash or excessively patient. For him, there is no

middle path, no golden mean, nor does he allow any moderating influence—any modifying thought or consideration,—to check the transition from one extreme to another. In his own words, 'to be once in doubt is once to be resolved'

Such a nature has at once its own merits and defects. While on the one hand, it elevates him to heights of nobility and dignity; on the other, it converts him to an inflammable material that is liable to explode suddenly and violently at the mere touch of a stray spark. On such a nature, Iago begins to throw, timely, cautiously and cleverly, his sparks of vague hints, doubts and suspicions which, falling on congenial material, soon blaze up into an all consuming fire of Jealousy.

Iago knows that Othello is tough and hardy and may not, at least in early stages, easily and quickly bend. As Othello says about himself 'No, Iago, I'll see before I doubt, when I doubt, prove; and on the proof,.....away at once with love or jealousy.' If the proof is false, tainted or unsatisfactory, his wrath will turn on the accuser, if convincing, then, on the guilty person. Either way, he will soon be resolved and ready for action at once and in right earnest. Iago's work is therefore two-fold; (1) first, to create a doubt in Othello's mind; (2) second, to confirm it to his satisfaction by proper proof or evidence. Othello must be set on the rack, made restless by sowing ugly doubts and suspicions which, like 'dangerous conceits, are in their nature poisons.....which, ... but with a little act upon the blood, burn like the mines of sulphur.'

PART IV.

ORIGIN, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF JEALOUSY.

I. (a) The Passion is first created. (b) Then, it is fed and fanned. These mark the first stage in the Movement of Passion, rendering Othello restless with doubts

II. (a) Next, it is insured against obstructive forces, like hesitation, doubt or denial. (b) Finally, it grows in strength till it becomes an irresistible impulse, an all-engrossing motive. These mark the second stage and prepare Othello for the final tragedy.

I (a) CREATION OF THE PASSION.

'*Ha! I like not that.*' This remark is uttered half aloud, and half in under-tone, and dropped immediately. And, when it begins to be discussed, it is half denied and half admitted, and then abruptly evaded. It marks the origin or creation, almost out of nothing, of the passion of Jealousy. These few words sow the first seeds of suspicion. Cassio and Desdemona are observed together,—the one pleading for her intercession on his behalf with Othello, and

the other promising help towards his re-instatement. Iago tries to depict this incident as the secret meeting of illicit lovers.

As a moraliser, he casts, as if it were a mere passing remark to the hearing of Othello, '*Ha I like not that!*' And, when asked what he said, he drops the matter saying—

Nothing my lord; or if—I know not what.

By this evasive answer, he implies that he is a man who has a secret to reveal, but would not reveal it for fear of wounding Othello's mind. By themselves, the words are nothing; but, the occasion on which they are uttered and the manner in which they are delivered and withdrawn, make them big with meaning. They become the starting-point of the tragedy. Though at the time they produce no effect, yet, in spite of his efforts to forget them, they haunt his mind and become a nucleus round which gather other suspicious incidents and circumstances that go to organize and increase Othello's jealousy.

I (b) HOW THE PASSION IS FED AND INCREASED.

Iago asks Othello this dark and dubious Question,—

My noble lord,

Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

1. With these words, and words of similar import hereafter used, Iago prepares the deadly ingredients of poison for Othello. Desdemona, a little while ago, pleading for Cassio, reminded Othello of the tender incident in the hearing of Iago—

What! Michael Cassio, that came a-wooing with you,
And so many a time, when I have spoken dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part.

Her object was merely to remind Othello of his former intimacy with Cassio whom he had lately dismissed, so that, at least for the sake of the happy memories of the past, he would speedily recall and restore him. She merely stated a fact as it had occurred, and had no evil intention or insinuation.

Iago who, while standing apart, listened to Desdemona's words about Michael Cassio 'who came a-wooing with Othello', now makes a roguish use of this knowledge. He puts it as a question to Othello and makes the question look very suspicious. And when Othello answers him in the affirmative, he pretends to be surprised and, with an ominous shake of his head, cries out '*Indeed!*' To which Othello replies, angry and surprised,—

Indeed! ay, *indeed*: discernest thou aught in that?

Iago, later on, takes up this thread, and with the help of other stray and equally slender threads, weaves the story of adulterous connection between Cassio and Desdemona.

Before, however, Iago proceeds further, he tries, like a true strategist, to make himself safe and sure in his position and test Othello's strength or weakness of mind. Otherwise, the soldierly Moor might turn against him and dash him and his plans to pieces. And hence cautiously, cleverly, and with the consummate art of a born diplomat, **he proceeds step by step** —

When Othello naturally asks Iago 'Why dost thou ask (such a question)?', the latter replies that it was simply to satisfy his curiosity, and that no further harm was meant by it.

When pressed to explain as to why he should be curious about a fact which was above suspicion and well-known, he merely answers by ejaculations and echoes, and contracts and purses his brows. These and his mysterious make-believe that he knows more than he is inclined to reveal, naturally whet Othello's curiosity and make him infer that Iago has,—

Some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown, and that he
dost mean something.

2. Then, in the name of their mutual Love and Honesty, Othello cajoles Iago to inform him of his thoughts,—

If thou dost love me, show me thy thought.

Iago catches these words and uses them to work himself still more strongly into the confidence of Othello, so that he might not be doubted when, later on, he would speak of Desdemona's (concocted) guilt. 'My lord, you know I love you,' says Iago, and, in answer, gets an endorsement and confirmation from Othello not only about his affection but also about his honesty and wisdom. Othello's words,—

And, for I know thou'rt full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou givest them breath,

satisfy Iago about the strength of his position and enable him to gradually reveal his thoughts.

3. He begins by making subtle insinuations against Cassio in a most round-about manner. Note the subtle, imperceptible, but the sure and steady way in which suspicion is sown in Othello's mind, in the following dialogue:—

IAGO: (As) for Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn, I think that he
is honest.

OTH: I think so too.

IAGO: (Then,) Men should be what they seem; or those that be
not, would they might seem none!

OTH: Certain, men should be what they seem.

IAGO: Why, then, I think Cassio's an honest man. (because he
appears to be honest.)

With this insinuation Iago stops, but it makes Othello all the more anxious to know his thoughts, and hence follow further questions and answers—

OTH: Nay, yet there's more in this;
I prithee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminatè; and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.

IAGO Good my lord, pardon me;
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and false,—

OTH: Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and makest his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

Then, Iago comes out with what appears to be a piece of information or friendly warning to Othello, telling him that he (Iago) is by nature a severe critic; that he is given 'to spy into abuses;' and that, oft by his jealousy (suspecting nature), he 'shapes faults that are not.' He would therefore prefer silence; for, 'out of his scattering and unsure observance,' he might be building 'a trouble, which will not be good for Othello's quiet' And therefore,—

It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.

Whereupon, Othello is perplexed and does not understand why Iago should speak of his own 'quiet' being disturbed. So he asks,—

What dost thou mean?

And Iago, instead of giving a direct reply, makes a general remark, which looks almost like a philosophic disquisition, on the assumed Reputation, Chastity or Morality of men and women,—

Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls;
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

4. Othello is still more perplexed. He is unable to grasp what Iago is aiming at; and yet his mind is now full of vague thoughts, misgivings, and surmises. This fellow first throws doubts on Cassio's honesty; he then moralises on womankind. Could it be that his own wife is of a doubtful character? Could there be any possible connection between her and Cassio?

Otherwise, why should Iago speak of Cassio and then of women in general. There must be some such thing at the back of his mind, for, Iago is a man who knows the world well but, only to him, he would not speak plainly, possibly through fear or respect. Anyhow, he must know the truth, and he would even compel Iago to give out his secrets. He therefore cries out,—

By Heaven, I'll know thy thoughts.

But Iago's answer is ready and quick,—

You cannot, if my heart were in your hands;
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

5. From a mere curiosity to anxiety, from anxiety to perplexity, from perplexity to doubt, is Othello gradually led. He is naturally very scrupulous and sensitive about the honor of his wife. He tries to know the truth but cannot get at it. Hence, he feels miserable and, in his misery, simply utters 'Ha!'.....

Iago, who can easily understand and read men's minds, knows that Othello has begun in his heart to entertain a doubt about the chastity of Desdemona. Apparently to warn Othello against entertaining any such doubt, but in reality to intensify it, he utters this friendly advice,—

O beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-eyed monster, which doth mock
The meat it feeds on.

By such clever devices, Iago turns Othello's feeble doubt into actual jealousy and immediately follows up his advice with the remark that—

That cuckold (or husband) lives in bliss
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves!

Othello finds himself in the same position as described in the last two lines. He too suspects, yet strongly loves, his wife. He too has a miserable time of it, living in such a vacillating, suspenseful, undecided state of mind. And so he cries out 'O Misery!'

6. Iago is up, once again, with his philosophy,—

Poor and content is rich and rich enough;
But riches fineless is as poor as winter
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.
Good Heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
From Jealousy!

This is a metaphor and a general remark. But it has a meaning behind. What Iago really drives at is that a poor man, who has an unchaste wife, and who knows about her infidelity but yet is indifferent about it,—is rich enough or lives a peaceful or happy life. But he, who has boundless riches, i. e. a chaste and

beautiful wife, and who fears he shall be poor, i.e. lives in doubt of her character, is as poor as winter, that is, he lives a poor, pinched life, in worry and doubt. So, he winds up his philosophical reflections by a prayer to Good Heaven, to defend mankind from Jealousy, but in reality, he intends, by his suggestion, to wake up that feeling in Othello.

7. Iago's plan succeeds. Othello fails to grasp the metaphor, but only catches the word 'Jealousy.' He finds Iago repeating it. Why does he do it? Does he mean that he (Othello) would become a prey to it? Is it not against his soldierly and honorable nature? Hence, to defend his self-respect, and to show the firmness of his character, he questions the other as to what he means by repeating that word 'Jealousy,'—

Why, why is this ?

Think 'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy ?

"No, no," he continues, "I will not feel jealous if I am told that,—

My wife is fair, feeds well, loves company.

Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well

Where virtue is, these are more virtuous. "

I will not easily give way to doubt. For, before I doubt I will see or have the facts ; when I have the facts, I will have them proved ; and, if convinced, then,—

Away at once with Love or Jealousy.

8. Othello has now his doubts and misgivings. But he wants facts and proofs before he can decide on action. Iago's path is thus rendered clear, and so he exclaims,—

I am glad of it ; for, now, I shall have reason

To show the love and duty that I bear you

With franker spirit.

Hitherto, he only succeeded in making Othello anxious, confounded and doubting. He was not sure whether after all Othello would yield to his villainous suggestions. Till now he has spent his time only in moralising, in throwing out hints and inferences. Now that Othello is inclined to fall in a doubting mood, and is willing to receive or listen to further proofs and confirmations of his doubt, Iago determines on his further plan, with these thoughts surging in his mind,—"Without facts, the mere doubts, that I have hitherto created, will not breed Jealousy ; without further proofs, that jealousy will not take hold of Othello. Yes, the time has now come for me to supply the facts ; else, the doubt in Othello's mind will fade away." Hence, without any more flinching or hesitation, he proceeds straight to his task, by boldly telling Othello,—

Look to your wife • Observe her well with Cassio.

The brevity and abruptness of this ostensibly kind and considerate but in reality cruel and tragical advice, unsettles Othello

and preys on his mind, night and day. But Iago is ever the master of every situation as it arises. He knows that this much by itself will have no effect. Has not Othello already said, 'Where virtue is, these are more virtuous?' Hence, he must strengthen the suspicion in Othello's mind. And so he advises thus,—

IAGO : Wear your eye thus, not jealous nor secure ;
I would not have your free and noble nature,
Out of self-bounty, be abused ; look to 't :
I know our country disposition well ;
In Venice, they do let Heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands ; their best conscience
Is not to leave it undone, but keep 't unknown.

OTH : Dost thou say so ?

IAGO : She did deceive her father, marrying you ;
And, when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,
She lov'd them most.

OTH : And so she did.

IAGO : Why, go to, then .
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To seal her father's eyes up close as oak ;
He thought 't was witchcraft ;—but I am much to blame—
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.

OTH : I am bound to thee for ever.

In the above advice, so many friendly suggestions, honest warnings, and sensible reasons are given that Othello is quite impressed by them —(1) Look to your wife, in her conduct towards Cassio. (2) Do it carefully but without a feeling of jealousy, or it will do injury to your free and noble nature. (3) I know the habits and dispositions of Venetians, my own country people, and especially the secret doings of the women-folk behind their husbands' backs. (4) And when, struck by this remark, Othello asks, 'dost thou say so?', comes Iago's convincing, almost crushing answer,—'Did she (your wife) not deceive her father and marry you?; and when she seemed to shake and fear your looks, did she not love them most?' (5) Again, is it not 'a seeming' in one so young, to deceive her father so completely, while she carried on her love-intrigue with you, that the poor old man thought it was 'witchcraft.'

Othello is almost stunned by the force of this reasoning,—“Desdemona is a Venetian and it is quite possible that she has acted after the manner of her country-women as alleged by Iago. It is very kind of him to have brought this fact to my notice.” Besides, “Has not Iago done so, most

unwillingly and reluctantly, almost forced to it thro' his deep love for me ? " With this thought, Othello's heart overflows with gratitude,—

I am bound to thee for ever.

9. But while Othello expresses his thanks, Iago for the first time observes that this piece of information 'hath a little dashed his spirits,' tho,' when told so, Othello at once denies it, to keep up his dignity, and says,—

Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago then follows up the advantage so gained, by declaring that whatever he has said so far, or is going to say further, is entirely in Othello's interest,—

I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love (for you.)

As if to warn his master against yielding to any wicked feeling or doing any hasty, untoward act, but really to strengthen such possibilities, he throws out this admonition,—

I am to pray you not to stain my speech
To grosser issues, nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion.

Iago wants to satisfy himself how far his words have worked upon Othello's mind. To test if the Moor is really moved or influenced to the extent desired, and if not, to think out better and other means to produce the desired effect, he queries at every stage if he is *moved*. Ostensibly, he shows his anxiety about Othello but, in reality, the more he plies his *moving* questions, the more does he see Othello *moved*. He therefore repeatedly says, 'But I do see you're moved;' and, to move him further, refers to Cassio and wants to say something about him, beginning—

Cassio's my worthy friend—

but at the very mention of his name, he sees Othello *moved* and his face colouring up. Thus Iago (now and then) holds out the red rag before the infuriated bull, to excite him to greater fury and thereby to test the nature of the animal he is dealing with, so that he might know how far he should go.

At the mention of Cassio's name Othello is really much moved, though he will not fully admit it—'No, not much moved.' Othello's anger against Cassio is manifest, but not against Desdemona yet. And so, after saying 'not much mov'd,' Othello continues,—

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

10. By this, the generous and trustful Othello means to imply that he has no real cause to be moved or agitated so long as

he thinks his wife honest,—pure and innocent; in other words, that he will have reason to get *moved* only if Desdemona proves dishonest. Upon this, Iago at once seizes the weak point in Othello and mocks him by saying,—

Long live she so! and long live you to think so!

At this mocking remark, Othello wants to say something about her erring or erratic nature which prompted her to choose him in preference to her own countrymen,—

And yet, how nature erring from itself—

But before he could finish his sentence, Iago suddenly but timely interrupts him with this friendly exclamation,—

Ay, there's the point!.....

Taking up his cue from Othello, Iago now turns all his artillery against Desdemona and points out how she had erred in marrying Othello, suppressing her natural inclinations in favour of her own countrymen,—

.....To be bold with you,—
Not to affect many proposed matches
Of her own clime, complexion and degree,
Whereto we see in all things Nature tends—

Does not this suggest, he asks, a most perverse will on her part?

Foh! one may smell in such, a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.

Then, with his mastery in the Art of Insinuation, he heightens the effect of his words, by an ingenious pretence,—

But pardon me; I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her;... ..

And yet, he follows up the vile insinuation, just dropped, with this anxious fear that—

Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country foams,
And happily repent.

Yes, yes! Sound reasoning! Solid conclusion! Desdemona may not be so honest,—so innocent and chaste as she looks. She must be watched. Influenced by such thoughts, Othello requests Iago when the latter is about to go away,—

Farewell, farewell;
If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe;.....

11. Iago's work is now progressing marvellously well. He must allow time for Jealousy to take root and grow. Hence, he says, 'I take my leave,' and pretends to retire and takes a few steps. But, recollecting a certain fact, he suddenly returns and warns

Othello against hastily restoring Cassio to his old place, as a wiser policy would dictate another course—

'Tho' it be fit that Cassio have his place,
 For sure he fills it up with great ability,
 Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
 You shall by that perceive him and his means :
 Note if your lady strain his entertainment
 With any strong or vehement importunity,
 Much will be seen in that.....

This is indeed a wise plan from Iago's point of view. For, it may enable Othello to observe and infer for himself the real relation between his wife and Cassio. Lest, however, Iago should be thought too busy, too pressing and apprehensive in his fears and suspicions, he gives this parting advice,—

In the meantime,
 Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
 And hold her free, I do beseech Your Honor.

12. With this, Iago retires. This first stage in the movement of Passion is over. Iago goes away fully satisfied with the success so far attained and to ruminate over the other details of his fiendish work. Othello is left alone, reflecting on the suspicions created by Iago, and marvelling at the insight, intelligence and experience in human affairs displayed by Iago,—

This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
 And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
 Of human dealings.

Iago in the meantime goes to his wife and secures Desdemona's handkerchief from Emilia. He thinks of the best way of using it as strong circumstantial evidence against both Cassio and Desdemona. The best way, according to him, would be to drop it in Cassio's room where he is sure to find it and in his curiosity will make some use of it. While he is thinking of this plan, he sees Othello coming and, like a veritable devil, chuckles to himself on his success in having destroyed his peace of mind or 'dashed his spirits'; and as he puts it,—

Not poppy, or mandragora,
 Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
 Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
 Which thou ow'dst yesterday.

13. And when, on his arrival, Iago accosts him, 'Why, how now, General?', Othello replies in great pain and anger,—

Avant ! Begone ! Thou hast set me on the rack :
 I swear 'tis better to be much abused
 Than but to know't a little.

*

*

*

He that is robbed, not wanting what is stolen,
 Let him not know't and he's not robbed at all.

But, now that he is made aware of it by Iago, he feels hurt and wounded in his Honor—the most vital or essential part of his being. Life now becomes a barren desert, a hideous mockery, a long-drawn torture, full of woe, weariness and disappointment. Everything about him seems dead, desolate and disgusting. And hence the painful out-burst of his heart,—sighing and sorrowing, and bidding a pathetic farewell to the dearest and most valued objects of his life in this world,—

.....O, now, for ever,
 Farewell the tranquil mind ! farewell Content !
 Farewell the plumed troop and the big wars
 That make ambition virtue ; O, farewell !
 Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump,
 The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
 The royal banner and all quality,—
 Pride, pomp and circumstance—of glorious war !
 And, O you mortal engines ! whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
 Farewell ! *Othello's occupation's gone !*

And, when Iago, in pretended surprise, asks him, 'Is it possible, my lord,' Othello loses self-control and, clutching him by the throat, shakes him hard and threatens him with death,—

Villain ! be sure thou prove my love a whore ;
 Be sure, of it ; give me the ocular proof ;
 Or, by the worth of man's eternal soul,
 Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
 Than answer my waked wrath !

The Passion has thus evolved by degrees from a vague, airy, indefinite nothing to a definite, clear and tangible shape. And to guard it in its growth at every stage, Iago who is well grafted into the love and confidence of Othello, from time to time, protests his innocence and honesty of motive, throughout his villainous course.

II. (A) THE PASSION IS INSURED AGAINST OBSTRUCTIVE FORCES.

Othello, when left alone, begins to ruminate. Several thoughts pass across his mind. He weighs the situation and concludes—

She's gone ; I am abused, and my relief
 Must be to loathe her. * * *
 I had rather be a toad
 And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love
 For others' uses.

Still, tho' jealous, he wavers. He is not sure if, after all, Desdemona can be really guilty. Seeing her coming at a distance, he says—

If she be false, O, then, Heaven mocks itself !
 I'll not believe 't.

Thus the Passion which Iago has created is now faced with certain obstacles. Doubt has once again set in, followed by denial. It needs revival. Hence, when Iago meets Othello, the latter takes him to task for suggesting to him that his wife is a whore. Iago must prove his vile charge if he cared for his life, as otherwise he (Othello) will vent his 'waked wrath' upon him and kill him outright. The proof, desired, must be direct, straight, living, ocular. Nothing short of this will do. Iago laughs within himself but outwardly pretends fear. He points out to the simple Othello that it is by no means possible to see illicit lovers in the act of adultery, even if they were as passionate as animals.

Othello sees the point and consents to have at least indirect but convincing proof. Iago then concocts the story of Cassio's confession of his guilt in his dreams while sleeping near him. Further, he makes a villainous use of Desdemona's handkerchief which he snatched from Emilia and dropped into Cassio's room. He speaks about these incidents and adduces them as circumstantial evidence in proof of his accusation. All these incidents influence Othello's mind, and he thus begins to argue within himself:—"Iago has all along been an honest man. He has so far been a very loyal and loving friend to me. The facts that he now adduces before me must therefore be true, and Desdemona must be unchaste."

With such thoughts, Othello's jealousy is fanned into a flame. It has now become a raging, burning passion in his mind. He is up against Cassio and cries,—

O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.

Revenge! Revenge! Revenge! This is the one idea, the only thought, that now fills his mind. The Passion, fed and fortified thus, has now become all-carrying,—

Like to the Pontic Sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up.

II. (B) THE PASSION HAS NOW BECOME STRONG ENOUGH TO BE A MOTIVE OF ACTION.

Othello, filled with revenge, now cries out to Iago,—

Within these three days, let me hear thee say
That Cassio is not alive.

And his request is met by Iago's ready answer,—

My friend is dead; 'tis done at your request.

But the revenge Iago wants is 'wife to wife'. He still fears that Othello may let Desdemona off. Hence, while he is angry, he cleverly brings in her topic and, as if out of pity, suggests,—

But let her live.

Upon this Othello replies angrily--

Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!

Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil.

The course is now decided. The Passion has become the motive-power of all his actions. Both Cassio and Desdemona must be killed,—the one by Iago, the other by Othello. And no time should be lost in doing it.

SIGNIFICANCE OF
ACT III.

Act III. opens with Cassio waiting about the doors of Desdemona's lodgings to seek an interview with her. On the advice of Iago, he has decided in the last Act to prefer an appeal to Desdemona. Accordingly, he now tries to see her through the good offices of Emilia, her maid. Just then Iago meets him. He promises to send his wife to Cassio presently and also to take the Moor away somewhere so that Cassio may have a free talk with Desdemona. To use his own words—

.....I will send her to you presently :
And I will devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free.

We thus see the Devil Iago making the necessary preparations for the execution of his third plan, viz., to accuse Cassio of misconduct with Desdemona. The three preliminary steps that Iago has decided to take, in furtherance of the third plan, are—(1) to set his wife to procure Cassio an interview with Desdemona ; (2) to draw the Moor apart for a time ; and (3) to bring him back just when Cassio is pleading to her

Advised by Iago, Emilia procures the desired interview in which Desdemona promises Cassio her whole-hearted support. At this time, Othello is out, inspecting the fortification in company with some gentlemen. After finishing his work, he is now returning to the castle with Iago. When Cassio sees both of them coming at a distance, he does not wish to face the General, being 'ill at ease' as he says, and leaves the place. Iago makes out this departure of Cassio as guilty-like and exclaims—'*Ha ! I like not that.*' This is the first direct step Iago takes to poison Othello's mind in furtherance of his third plan.

On the arrival of Othello in company with Iago, Desdemona, with a childish persistency, plies him with prayers and entreaties for the restoration of Cassio. Othello feels that he has had enough of these prayers and importunities on behalf of Cassio and, not wishing to be bothered any more with them, replies—

Prithee, no more ; let him come when he will :
I will deny thee nothing.

After receiving this favourable reply from Othello, both Desdemona and Emilia leave him as he wishes to be left alone.

Iago, now alone with the Moor, artfully questions him whether Cassio was acquainted with Desdemona before her marriage. On receiving an affirmative answer, he purses his brow and cries out ominously,—*indeed !* (a) With such dark hints and

ejaculations, Iago sows the seeds of suspicion in Othello's mind. He further counsels him, as his friend and well-wisher, to be specially mindful of Cassio's conduct whenever in the company of Desdemona. Othello's suspicion takes root. (b) He requests Iago to set on his wife to observe Desdemona and Cassio and bring further proofs. (c) Iago further concocts the story of Cassio's confession of his guilt muttered out in his sleep. He tells Othello how he found Cassio talking in his dream about his love and kisses to Desdemona and smacking his lips as if imprinting kisses on her. This deepens Othello's suspicions and he cries out,—*'O monstrous! monstrous!* (d) Iago then tells him of a handkerchief, spotted with strawberries, seen in Desdemona's hands; and that, lately, he saw it with Cassio who wiped his beard with it.

Othello is now convinced of her guilt and swears revenge against both. Iago also kneels and swears help to wronged Othello. Thus, the cloud, at first, no bigger than a man's hand, appears on the far horizon. It gathers volume, grows bigger and bigger, till at last the whole mental sky of Othello is overcast with ominous clouds. We see terrible flashes of lightning and hear loud and dismal thunders reverberating overhead, threatening a terrific storm and the fall of deadly thunderbolts.

Both passions, Envy and Jealousy, have reached a very high pitch in this Act. We saw the birth of the passion of Envy in the First Act and its growth and development in the Second. We see it reaching its climax in this and the next Act. Iago has been, from the very first, the Devil's dynamo well-charged with the driving power of Envy. This evil passion has so far worked underground, in dark and devious ways, indirectly, upon other objects and persons. But now, in this Act, it fastens upon the real object of its malice and hatred. Iago has hitherto settled and accomplished the preliminary steps and paved the way for the final stroke,—*'coup de grace'*—with the skill and calculation of a first-class diplomat.

We have also observed how one evil Emotion has led to another; and this one, to still another; and so on, in an endless chain. The evil progeny of passions, born of Envy, are now seen breeding, evolving, and multiplying in diverse, tortuous, complex lines. Iago, the Demon of Envy, has succeeded in creating the Passion of Jealousy in Othello. Both Envy and Jealousy,—with their attendant brood, sophistry, diplomacy, double-dealing, duplicity, lying, trickery, treachery, callousness, cruelty, meanness, malice, hatred, and revenge,—are fearful passions born of narrow selfishness and, if not trained, curbed, checked or diverted into healthier channels, prove equally harmful and destructive not only to their victims but to all others affected by them. Allied with other evil factors, they have always led, directly or indirectly, to frightful wars, commotions and other social evils and disharmonies.

Iago has now succeeded in poisoning the mind of Othello, a typical and loving husband, and making him jealous. He has created this passion of jealousy where it did not exist and ought not to exist, because there was no real cause or foundation for it. But, endowed by nature with an exceedingly sharp and clear intellect, he can concoct incidents and create false foundations and make them look like real ones. We note the insidious birth and growth of this passion of jealousy, which is fundamentally an outcome of sexual ownership and exclusiveness,—the essentials of Monogamy. These have, in course of time, developed into sexual honor and chastity.

Slowly, imperceptibly, stage by stage, from ordinary Curiosity to Anxiety, thence to Perplexity, thence to Doubt, and from thence to Jealousy, has Iago skilfully succeeded in leading Othello on. (a) First, he throws a vague hint,—‘*Ha! I like not that*’, which naturally excites one’s curiosity to know what is meant by it. (b) Then, by echoes, ejaculations and facial movements, by contracting his brows and pursing up his lips, he indicates that he has something to reveal, but would not reveal it. (c) This makes Othello anxious. He desires to know Iago’s thoughts. He uses cajolery, persuasion, entreaty. But Iago appears strong-willed and will not come out. He prefers to merely philosophize and pass general remarks, with a purpose hidden behind. These only make Othello perplexed and ever more perplexed. (d) Then, Iago touches upon the so-called honesty of Cassio and the trickeries of women. (e) Othello, in his perplexed mood, takes it to apply to his wife and begins to doubt her honour. (f) Seeing Othello in this doubting mood, Iago supplies the facts with apparently sound reasons and arguments, built upon Desdemona’s past conduct, now made to look so suspicious. (g) Othello, who is already confounded and doubting, is now practically inclined towards the probability of her guilt. He begins to feel jealous of her and is, even to a certain extent, ‘dashed in his spirits’.

How painful has been *the conflict* in Othello between *Reason and Passion*, in which we see Reason ever receding and weakening, and Passion fast advancing and gaining absolute sway over him! We witness the violent commotion and terrible havoc caused by this Passion in its onward course. Can anything be more sorrowful and shocking to our fine sensibilities than the spectacle of a great and noble nature, like Othello’s, suffering all the torments of the fabled damned? Truly, the sight is exceedingly pitiful, painful, oppressive and agonizing. In the total darkness, caused by this high-strung passion, we see occasional rays of good sense, light and truth returning but only to fade away soon. Othello suspects and yet in the same breath acquits and trusts. He angrily clutches the slanderer of his wife by the throat and demands ocular proofs. But Iago, undeterred by this disgraceful treatment,

only changes his tactics and looks wronged and mortified. With an air of injured love, loyalty and innocence, he thus appeals to Heaven,—

O Heaven defend me !
Are you a man ? have you a soul or sense ?
God be wi ' you ; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That livest to make thine honesty a vice !
O monstrous world ! Take note, take note, O world,
To be direct and honest is not safe.

(To Oth) I thank you for this profit, and from hence
I'll love no friend sith love breeds such offence.

This invocation to Heaven stings Othello to pain and remorse. He thinks he has possibly made a grievous mistake by mistrusting an honest man. He pulls himself up and asks Iago to hold on—

Nay, stay ; thou should'st be honest : (i.e. not hide anything from me).

At once comes the sharp reply from Iago as if hurt and remorse-stricken,—

I should be wise ; for, honesty's a fool
And loses that it works for.

Then, Othello falls in a confused, wavering mood and says—

.....By the world,
I think my wife be honest, and think she is not ;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not ;
I'll have some proof.

And again,—

.....Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face. If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it. Would, I were satisfied !

But Iago, ever ready and resourceful, knows how to satisfy Othello in his wish. With his inborn alacrity, insight and foresight, he goes on apace in his infernal operations without delay, without pity or ruth. He tells Othello that he shall have proofs to satisfy him,—such proofs as are possible under the circumstances of the case,—proofs that will satisfy any prudent, reasonable and intelligent man. Iago adduces these proofs which appear convincing and make the Moor jealous.

Othello's Sense or Reason struggles, at first strongly, then feebly, till at last it is absolutely overcome by his passion of Jealousy. From this moment onwards, Othello, the victim, in the grip of Jealousy, looks different to us from the free and open Othello, the noble and chivalrous Moor who woo'd Desdemona, the valiant General who was sent to Cyprus in command. The evil passion liberates the beast in him. He now swears bitter revenge

and thirsts for the blood of his Love who, he thinks, has proved false to him.

Thus, we are now in supreme tension and hold our breath in anxious suspense about further developments. We see in this Act all the forces of the two terrible passions tending to the final catastrophe. What remains is but the bursting of the shell, the final explosion, which is reserved for the next two Acts.

In this Play, we see the master-mind of Shakespeare at its best. His knowledge of the human passions and feelings and his vivid imagination or sympathy which puts him in the place of each Character or Actor, are wonderful, matchless and unsurpassed. We observe, not only his amazing capacity of feeling and suffering himself along with each character created by his genius, but also the marvellous power of mental detachment which enables him to picture, at the same time, characters of quite opposite types. As regards this aspect of Shakespeare's genius, astonishing us with his wide and vivid imagination and with his mastery over human feelings and emotions, no truer or fitter words have perhaps been uttered than those that fell from the lips of the great Rationalist of America, Ingersoll,—

He knew the thrills and ecstasies of Love,
The savage joys of Hatred and Revenge ;
He heard the hiss of Envy's snakes,
And watched the eagles of Ambition soar.
There was no Hope that did not put its star above his head,—
No Fear he had not felt—
No Joy that had not shed its sunshine on his face.

Surely, no other mind could have pictured Desdemona and Othello swayed by the thrills and ecstasies of Love ; or Iago, Envy's Snake, hissing and darting his venom on his victims ; or the free and open Moor, the loving husband, now overcome by Jealousy,—the green-eyed monster,—yielding to the savage impulses of Hatred and Revenge.

The whole of the Third Scene of this Act, especially the dialogue between Othello and Iago in it, is a master-piece,—one of the finest, subtlest, most potent and painful in the literature of the world. It should be closely studied, carefully analysed, and deeply pondered over and over again for the profitable lessons it contains for our guidance.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF

Sc. 4 of Act III, and the whole of Act IV.

Desdemona now racks her head about the missing handkerchief but cannot tell how and where she could have lost it. And when Othello presently meets her, he, in order to test the truth of Iago's statement, asks her for 'that' handkerchief. And when she cannot produce it, he magnifies its importance, saying that an Egyptian Charmer gave it to his mother and that there was magic in the web of it. Poor girl, she is unable to see through Othello's mind. She considers the loss of handkerchief as too trifling a matter to be made much of; so, like a child, tenacious of its desires, she repeatedly brings in the topic of Cassio's restoration. But Othello would not give up his demand for the 'napkin' and, not getting it, gets angry, speaks harshly to her and leaves her abruptly. At this, she becomes very distressed but, on second thoughts, she takes a charitable view of his conduct and ascribes it to some trouble in State-affairs. And when Cassio later comes up to remind her of his prayer, she advises him to wait awhile patiently.

Othello is now in the grip of two terrible passions,—Jealousy and Revenge. And these are fed and inflamed by Iago with his masterly touches to such an extent that Othello is unable to bear the strain and consequently falls into a trance.

After his recovery, he becomes a pliant tool in the hands of Iago who tells him to 'encave' himself, to remain in hiding at some distance so as to over-hear the conversation between Iago and Cassio about Cassio's love-affairs. Othello, only seeing Cassio's gestures but not hearing his words distinctly, takes him to be giving out his secret adulterous dealings with Desdemona, while in truth Cassio was speaking about his mistress, Bianca. He even sees that fateful handkerchief now produced by Bianca to whom Cassio gave it to be copied. He is now thoroughly convinced of their guilt. Burning with Rage and Revenge, he once more settles with Iago that both of them (Cassio and Desdemona) should be immediately despatched.

Lodovico arrives from Venice with a Senatorial order, recalling Othello and appointing Cassio as the Governor of Cyprus in his place. While Othello is reading the letter of the Senate, Lodovico enquires after Cassio, and Desdemona tells him of the 'unkind breach' between him and Othello and hopes that he shall make all well. She further innocently expresses her wish,—“I would do much to atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.” Othello mistakes this declaration as the flaunting of her guilt and cries out 'Fire and brimstone' and strikes her, to the amazement of all. He orders her to retire to the castle and presently goes there himself. He questions first Emilia, then Desdemona herself, in order to verify the truth of his wife's misconduct. He, however, fails in this, and retires in anger.

Othello, overpowered by, and unable to bear the pangs of jealousy, falls into a fit of apoplexy, while Iago, heartlessly gloats over his success and looks on.



How Evil gloats over its own success in the ruin of Good !

Iago: { " Work on, my medicine, work !
Thus are all credulous fools caught " .

(Pic. 39.)

SCENE I.—CYPRUS. BEFORE THE CASTLE.

Othello's conviction of Desdemona's (supposed) guilt affects him seriously and brings on a trance. But Iago exults over it.

[N.B. In this scene, Othello's conviction of Desdemona's supposed guilt begins to work on his mind. In the first stages, he experiences a strange sensation of 'a shadowing passion' the cause of which he himself is not aware of. 'It is not words that tremble me', says he, 'It comes over my memory, as doth a raven o'er the infected house, boding to all'. He cannot explain it, but only feels and feels strongly that that sensation is the result of some very powerful feeling that, hidden in his heart, drives him on. 'Nature,' he persuades himself, 'would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction.' Under the sway of that strange feeling, he loses control over himself and gives vent to it in broken thoughts and unconnected speeches. These but indicate the agony of his mind and, after a while, he is overpowered and falls into a trance.

Iago, who has all along professed himself as Othello's friend, but in reality acted as his worst foe by working him up to that state of mind, now reveals himself in his true colours as a cunning and heartless devil. We see his devilry in all its hideous nakedness when he chuckles most shamelessly over his prostrate victim and gloats over the success of his plans. Later, fearing any untoward consequence to Othello's life, he cries out for help and brings on Cassio to the scene.]

IAGO : Will you think so ?

OTH : Think so, Iago !

IAGO : What, to kiss in private ?

OTH : An unauthorized¹ kiss.

IAGO : Or, to be naked with her friend in bed an hour or more, not meaning any harm ?

OTH : Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm !

It is hypocrisy against² the devil :

They that mean virtuously and yet do so,

The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt Heaven.³

IAGO : If they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip :⁴

But, if I give my wife a handkerchief—

1. Unauthorized : unlawful. 2. Against : greater than that practised by ; the meaning is,—it is a grievous sin which cannot be pardoned. 3. They...Heaven those people, who are well-meaning and yet behave hypocritically, soon yield to the temptation of the Devil, and so commit sins against God. 4. If.....slip : if they mean virtuously and behave hypocritically, it is only a pardonable sin (not serious).

OTH : What then ?

IAGO Why, then, 'tis hers, my lord, and being hers,
She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

OTH She is protectress of her honour too.¹
May she give that ?

IAGO . Her honour is an essence² that's not seen ;
They have it very oft that have it not.³
But, for the handkerchief—

OTH : By heaven ! I would most gladly have forgot it .
Thou said'st⁴ —O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all⁵ —he had my handkerchief.

IAGO . Ay, what of that ?

OTH : That's not so good now,—

IAGO : What, if⁶ I had said I had seen him do you wrong ?—
Or heard him say ?—as knaves be such abroad,
Who, having by their own importunate suit
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose
But they must blab⁷ —

OTH : Hath he said anything ?

IAGO : He hath, my lord ; but, be you well assured,
No more than he'll unswear.⁸

OTH : What hath he said ?

IAGO : 'Faith, that he did—I know not what he did,—

OTH : What, what ?

IAGO : Lie—

OTH : With her ?

AGO : With her, on her,—what you will.⁹

1. Shethat ? She is the guardian of her honor or chastity as much as of the love-token from her wedded lord,—a token to be ever held sacred by her. If she were to part with such a token, might she part with her honor too ? 2. Essence : a mere quality 3. They.. ...not : people who are really dishonorable very often appear to be honorable. 4. Said'st . reminded. 5. It comes.....to all . just as a crow hovers over a plague-stricken house and indicates death, so does the thought of the handkerchief hover in my mind, indicating some serious consequence. 6. If : suppose. 7. As knaves .. .blab : as there are people in this world who satisfy their passions, either by their pressing (great) love to a woman or by yielding to the pressing love of a woman voluntarily offered to them, and are still foolish enough not to keep their secrets to themselves, but to mutter them out 8. No moreunswear he will never swear to it, or he will not admit it, but even deny it on oath. 9. What you will ; You may take it in any way you like,

OTH. Lie with her! lie on her!—We say lie on her, when they belie her.—Lie with her!¹ that's fulsome!² Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief!—To confess, and be hanged for his labour; first, to be hanged, and then to confess. I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction.³ It is not words⁴ that shake me thus. Pish! Noses, ears and lips. Is't possible?—Confess? Handkerchief?—O devil!—
[Falls in a trance.]

IAGO: (To self) Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools⁵ are caught:
And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,
All guiltless, meet reproach.⁶ (Shouting) What, ho! my lord!
My lord, I say! Othello!
[Enter Cassio.]

1. Lie with and lie on: the first refers to a woman's adulterous behaviour; the second refers to the slander about her by others, that is, 'to belie her.'
2. Fulsome: significant or full of meaning. ('Lie with her. . . O devil!') This para indicates that Othello feels that all his faculties are failing him without his knowing why. Hence broken reflections and unconnected words and thoughts. These show the first stage of his mind before he falls into a fit.) 3. Nature..... instruction a person would not naturally yield to or be overcome by such a shadowing (or, over-powering) passion (or, feeling of jealousy) unless there were some instruction (or, instructing, directing or driving cause; that is, a strong and hidden cause for it.) 4. Not words: not words, but some deep feeling.
5. Credulous fools: simpletons that readily believe anything. 6. Meet reproach. face scandal; or, are held guilty.

Cassio appears on the Scene but is craftily sent away by Iago, for fear that Othello may recover from his fit and speak to Cassio.



How the devil can use both precept and example for his purpose!

(Pic 40).

Cassio Appears on the Scene, but is sent away by Iago, to Avert his Meeting with Othello (On Recovery).

CAS . What's the matter ?

IAGO : My lord is fallen into an epilepsy ;¹ that is his second fit ;² he had one yesterday.

CAS : Rub him about the temples.

IAGO . No, forbear ; the lethargy³ must have his ⁴ quiet course ; if not, he foams at mouth, and by and by breaks out to savage madness.⁵ Look ! he stirs ; do you withdraw⁶ yourself a little while, he will recover straight,⁷ when he is gone, I would on great occasion⁸ speak with you (Exit Cassio.) How is it, General ? have you not hurt your head ?

OTH Dost thou mock me ?

IAGO . I mock you ! no, by heaven. Would, you would bear your fortune like a man !⁹

OTH . A horned man's a monster and a beast.¹⁰

IAGO : There's many a beast then in a populous city, and many a civil monster.¹¹

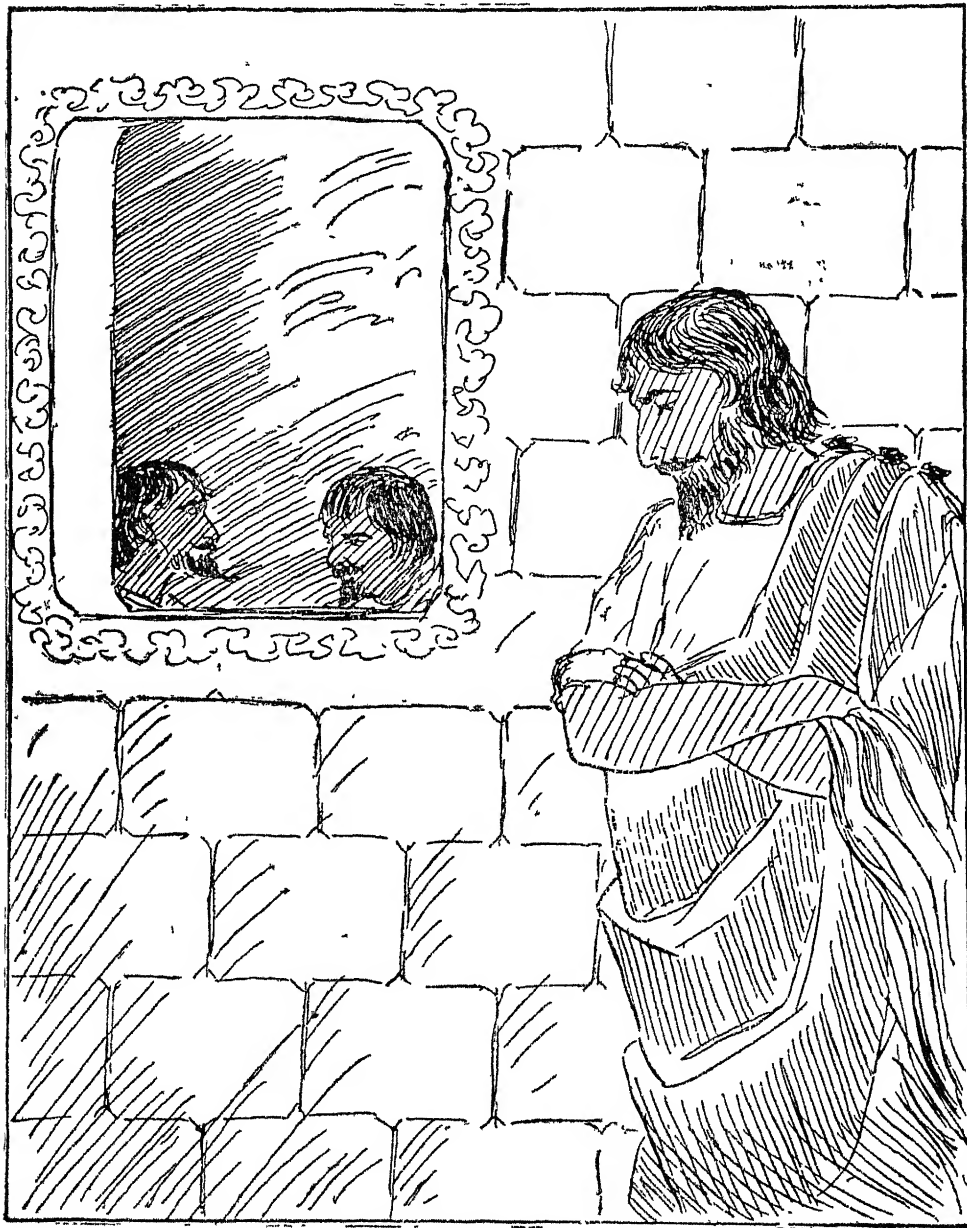
OTH : Did he confess it ?

IAGO : Good sir, be a man ; think every bearded fellow that's but yok'd may draw with you ;¹² there's millions now alive that nightly lie in those improper beds which they dare swear peculiar ;¹³ your case is better.¹⁴ O ! 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock, to lip a wanton in a secure couch, and to suppose her chaste !¹⁵ No, let me know ; and, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.¹⁶

OTH O ! thou art wise , 'tis certain.

1. Epilepsy a fit due to the affection of the brain, ending in loss of consciousness. 2. Second fit . Othello had no such fit before ; this is only one of Iago's lies to delude Cassio 3. Lethargy unconscious state. 4. His . its. 5. By and by..... madness : then, he becomes violent. 6. Do you withdraw is the same as 'you do withdraw' ; the use of 'do' is for emphasis. 7. Straight at once. 8. Great occasion important matter 9. Your fortune.....man . your troubles like a man (i. e. courageously). 10. A hornedbeast . this refers to the Devil in a human form with horns and tail. 11. There's.....monster : in big and crowded cities, there are many such beasts and monsters. (This refers to such people as are outwardly innocent and polite, but inwardly very licentious and wicked ; i.e. they are animals in their passions ; and monsters or hypocrites, in hiding their rascalities. 12. Think.....you : know that all grown-up men who are married may draw with you, i.e. sail in the same boat with you,—have similar experience (like yours). 13. There's.....peculiar : there are countless people even now who spend their nights with other women ; and yet this conduct of theirs, they will readily admit to be a bit peculiar, but not wrong or criminal. Iago implies that the whole world is really corrupt, though it appears to be virtuous. Hence the moral for Othello,—that he should not mind his wife's misconduct. 14. Your case is better . as Desdemona has gone wrong only with one person, (i. e. with Cassio) but not like others, with many. 15. 'Tis..... chaste : it is nothing but sheer wickedness or a huge mockery in this world where people believe in Chastity where it does not exist (Secure couch . bed believed to be safe, i.e. chaste or pure.) 16. Let me.....shall be . let me not be ignorant (of such persons) ; for, when once I know, I know how to treat her.

Othello, is made to overhear the conversation between Iago and Cassio regarding Bianca. But Othello mistakes it for a reference to Desdemona.



How easily are those in the grip of Passion deluded and led into unforeseen dangers!

(Pic. 41.)

OTHELLO IS FURTHER DELUDED INTO EAVES-DROPPING.

IAGO. Stand you awhile apart; confine yourself but in a patient list.¹ Whilst you were here o'erwhelmed with your grief,² —a passion most unsuited such a man,³ —Cassio came hither; I shifted him away, and laid good' scuse upon your ecstasy,⁴ bade him anon⁵ return and here speak with me; the which he promis'd. Do but encave⁶ yourself, and mark the fleers, the gibes and notable scorns, that dwell in every region of his face;⁷ for, I will make him tell the tale anew, where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when, he hath, and is again to cope⁸ your wife. I say, but mark his gesture. Marry! patience; or, I shall say you are all in-all in spleen, and nothing of a man.⁹

OTH. Dost thou hear, Iago?—I will be found most cunning in my patience, but—dost thou hear?—most bloody.¹⁰

IAGO. That's not amiss, but yet keep time in all.¹¹ Will you withdraw? (Othello goes apart.)

(To Self) Now will I question Cassio of Bianca, a housewife that, by selling her desires, buys herself bread and clothes;¹² it is a creature that dotes on Cassio, as 'tis the strumpet's plague to beguile many and be beguil'd by one.¹³ He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain from the excess of laughter. Here he comes: (Cas. coming.) As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad; and, his unbookish¹⁴ jealousy must construe poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour, quite in the wrong. (To Cas.) How do you now, Lieutenant?

CAS. The worser that you give me the addition whose want even kills me.¹⁵

1. Confine .. list: keep yourself but (only or wholly) within the list (or limit) of patience; i.e. be patient. 2. O'erwhelmed with your grief: overpowered by your fit. 3. A passionman a passion (that is, fit or madness) most unsuitable to or unworthy of a man of your rank, (i.e. a general). 4. 'Scuse... .. ecstasy. excuse or cause for your fit. 5. Anon presently. 6. Encave: hide in a cave or a corner. 7. Mark... ..face note the sneers and similar contemptuous expressions in his face. 8. Cope associate, or be in company with. 9. Or, I shall... ..man otherwise, I will simply say that you are completely under the influence of spleen (i.e. choler or wrath) and not a man who can control himself. 10. I will... bloody I will stoop to cunning practice, (patient listening or eaves-dropping) as suggested by you, though it is against my nature, but at any rate, I will prove bloody and kill him outright. 11. That's not, .. all you are not far wrong (or you are right to some extent in what you say); but yet, keep time (that is, keep to measure or time and go step by step; do not act in haste) in all you do. 12. By selling .. clothes: earns her livelihood by selling her honor (i.e.) by prostitution. 13. The strumpet's..... one. the prostitute's pestilential or troublesome business to fool many and be herself fooled by one (whom she dotes). 14. Unbookish. unlettered or unchecked by learning or experience (that is, raw or crude). 15. The worser..... kills me. (I feel) all the more miserable over the dignity which you give me, as the lack of it has already made me miserable enough.

IAGO : (Aloud). Ply Desdemona well¹ and you are sure on't.
(Speaking lower) Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power, how quickly should you speed !²

CAS : (Laughing). Alas ! poor caitiff !³

OTH : Look ! how he laughs already !

IAGO : I never knew woman love man so.

CAS : Alas ! poor rogue, I think, i' faith, she loves me.

OTH : (Aside). Now he denies it faintly and laughs it out.

IAGO . Do you hear, Cassio ?

OTH : (Aside). Now he importunes him to tell it o'er : go to : well said, well said.

IAGO : She gives it out that you shall marry her ; do you intend it ?

CAS : Ha, ha, ha ! (Ironical laughter)

OTH : Do you triumph, Roman ? do you triumph ?⁴

CAS : I marry her ! what, a customer ?⁵ I prithee, bear some charity to my wit,⁶ do not think it so unwholesome.⁷ Ha, ha, ha ! (Laughing)

OTH : So, so, so, so ! They laugh that win.

IAGO : 'Faith, the cry⁸ goes that you shall marry her.

CAS : Prithee, say true.

IAGO : I am a very villain else.⁹

OTH : Have you scored¹⁰ me ? Well.

CAS : This is the monkey's¹¹ own giving out : she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

OTH : Iago beckons me ; now he begins the story.

CAS : She was here even now ; she haunts me¹² in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians ; and thither comes this bauble,¹³ and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck :—

OTH : Crying, 'O dear Cassio !' as it were : his gesture imports it.

CAS : So hangs and lolls and weeps upon me : so hales and pulls me ; ha, ha, ha !

1. Ply Desdemona well imple Desdemona warmly. 2. Speed : prosper.
3. Caitiff : fool or wretch ; (said half-playfully with reference to Bianca).
4. Do you triumph, Roman ? : do you thus celebrate or make a show of your success (like a Roman general) ? 5. Customer : loose woman. 6. Bearwit : have some (better) regard for my wisdom. 7. Unwholesome : unhealthy or weak. 8. Cry : general talk or rumour. 9. I..... else : otherwise (i.e. if it is not true,) take me to be a villain or a dishonest man 10. Scored : won over. 11. Monkey : a term of endearment referring to Bianca. 12. Haunts me : shadows or closely follows and overcomes me. 13. Bauble : trifle or insignificant thing ; (referring to the nuisance of Bianca).

OTH : Now he tells how she plucked¹ him to my chamber. O ! I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.²

CAS : Well, I must leave her company.

IAGO : Before me !³ look, where she comes. [Bianca coming.

CAS : 'Tis such another fitchew ! marry, a perfumed one.⁴ (To Bianca) What do you mean by this haunting of me ?

BIA : Let the devil and his dam⁵ haunt you !

(Holding a handkerchief).....What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now ? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out⁶ the work ! A likely⁷ piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there ! This is some minx's⁸ token, and, I must take out the work ! There, give it your hobby-horse ;⁹ wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

CAS : How now, my sweet Bianca ! how now ! how now !

OTH : By heaven, that should be my handkerchief !

BIA . An¹⁰ you'll come to supper to-night, you may ; an you will not, come when you are next prepared for. [Exit.

IAGO : After her, after her.

CAS : 'Faith, I must ; she'll rail¹¹ in the street else.

IAGO . Will you sup there ?

CAS : Faith, I intend so.

IAGO : Well, I may chance to see you ; for I would very fain speak with you.

CAS : Prithee, come ; will you ?

IAGO : Go to ; say no more.

[Exit Cassio

1 Plucked took suddenly. 2. I see ... to I shall first of all revenge myself on you (by cutting your nose or by doing some injury to you) and think of other things later on. 3. Before me are you earnest about it or do you say it only for my sake (to deceive me). 4 'Tis suchone O, she is a pole-cat (a bad-smelling wild cat,) though she smells sweet. 5. Thedam the devil and his mother (or the whole group of devils). 6 Take out : copy. 7. Likely : funny. 8. Minx's loose woman's. 9 Hobby-horse pet and loose woman. 10. An : if. 11. Rai! bawl out, (against me.)

Othello comes out of the retiring place, meets Iago, and resolves to kill Desdemona.



Jealousy (like Rapacity or Bigotry) destroys in a moment what Love has taken years to build up.

(Pic. 42.)

OTHELLO NOW DECIDES TO KILL DESDEMONA.

OTH. (Advancing.) How shall I murder him, Iago ?

IAGO : Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice ? (misconduct)

OTH : O, Iago !

IAGO : And, did you see the handkerchief ?

OTH : Was that mine ?

IAGO : Yours, by this hand ! do you see how he prizes the foolish woman, your wife ? She gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

OTH : I would have him nine years a-killing.¹ A fine woman ! a fair woman ! a sweet woman ! (said sarcastically)

IAGO : Nay, you must forget that. (i.e. her charms)

OTH . Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damned (killed) to-night ; for, she shall not live. No, my heart is turned to stone ;² I strike it, and it hurts my hand. O ! the world hath not a sweeter creature ; she might lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.³

IAGO : Nay, that's not your way.⁴

OTH : Hang her ! I do but say what she is So delicate with her needle ! an admirable musician ! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear ;⁵ of so high and plenteous wit and invention !⁶ —

IAGO : She's the worse for all this.

OTH : O ! a thousand, thousand times ; and then, of so gentle a condition ! (i.e. calm and refined)

IAGO : Ay, too gentle. (i.e. to be trusted, being so cunning)

OTH Nay, that's certain ; but, yet, the pity of it, Iago ! O ! Iago, the pity of it, Iago !

IAGO : If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent⁷ to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

OTH : I will chop her into messes.⁸ Cuckold me !⁹

IAGO : O ! 'tis foul in her.

OTH . With mine officer !

IAGO : That's fouler.

OTH : Get me some poison, Iago ; this night : I'll not expostulate¹⁰ with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide¹¹ my mind again. This night, Iago.

IAGO : Do it not with poison, strangle her (i. e. directly by your own hands and not indirectly by poison) in her bed,—even the bed she hath contaminated.

OTH : Good, good ; the justice of it pleases ; very good.

IAGO : And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker ;¹² you shall hear more by midnight.

* * * *

1. Nine years a-killing : i.e. prolong his torture. 2. My..... stone : my heart has become hard as stone, merciless. 3. O ! the world.... tasks : Alas, she has beauty and charms, fit to be an empress and even control her husband ; (And yet, the pity is, that such a woman has a foul heart.) 4. Nay way : no, that ought not to be your thought now. 5. She will.....bear her singing is so sweet that even a (ferocious animal like a) bear will be charmed to tameness. 6. Invention : imagination : 7. Patent permission. 8. Messes pieces. 9. Cuckold me ! : To make a cuckold or fool of me ! 10. Expostulate . argue or waste time. 11. Unprovide . unsettle. 12. Undertaker : one who undertakes to kill ; killer.

Othello strikes Desdemona before Lodovico, Iago and others.



How all things, at times, yield to the tyrannical sway of the stronger
but baser passions of man!

(Pic. 43.)

IN THE PRESENCE OF LODOVICO, AND OTHERS, OTHELLO STRIKES DESDEMONA.

LOD : The Duke and Senators of Venice greet you. (Gives him a packet)

OTH : I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.¹ (Opens and reads)

DES . And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico ?

IAGO . I am very glad to see you, Signior ; welcome to Cyprus.

LOD : I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio ?

IAGO : Lives,² sir.

DES . Cousin, there's fall'n between him and my lord, an unkind breach.³ but, you shall make all well.

OTH : *Are you sure of that ?* [Still looking at the paper]

DES . My lord ?

OTH : (Reading) 'This fail you not to do, as you will.—

LOD . He did not call ;⁴ he's busy in the paper.

Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio ?

DES . A most unhappy one ; I would do much to atone⁵ them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

OTH : *Fire and brimstone !*⁶ (Looks angry.) * * *

DES : What, is he angry ?

LOD : May be, the letter mov'd him ; for, as I think, they do command him home, deputing Cassio in his Government.

DES : Trust me, I am glad on't.

OTH : *Indeed !*

DES : My lord !

OTH : I am glad to see you mad.

DES . Why, sweet Othello ?

OTH . Devil ! (Strikes her.)

DES . I have not deserved this. (Weeps.)

LOD : My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice, though I should swear I saw't : 'tis very much ; make her amends ;⁷ she weeps.

OTH . O, devil, devil !⁸ if that the earth could teem with woman's tears, each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.⁹ Out of my sight !.....(To Lodo.) Concerning this, sir,—O well-painted passion !¹⁰—I am commanded home. (To Des.) Get you away ; I'll send for you anon. (To Lod.) Sir, I obey the mandate, and will return to Venice. (To Des.) Hence ! avaunt ! (Exit Des) Cassio shall have my place. And,—sir, to-night, I do entreat that we may sup together ; you are welcome, sir, to Cyprus.—Goats and monkeys !¹¹ [Exit.]

1. I kisspleasures : I kiss (or respect) the paper containing their instructions. 2. Lives : he is 'alive and kicking', i.e. quite well. 3. Unkind breach : unfortunate rupture or difference. 4. Call. call you, but etc., 5. Atone : reconcile. 6. Fire and brimstone : go to hell (for it.) 7. Make her amends : apologise to her (and pacify her.) 8. O, devil, devil what great devilry ; (i.e. her weeping is a mere pretence.) 9. If that.....crocodile even if the earth were to be filled with the tears of a woman, every drop of it will be false, ('That' has no meaning here, but used for meter only. Prove a crocodile : prove as false as a 'crocodile's tear', i. e. hypocritical) 10. Well-painted passion : a passion (or weeping) which is well-painted, well got-up or pretended. 11. Goats and monkeys : words indicative of a spirit of lust, (these refer to Cassio and Desdemona. Originally these were used by Iago, and, having made a deep impression in Othello's mind, they are now repeated by him.)

Iago, Lodovico, and others, comment on Othello's harsh and strange behaviour.



What is there a man or woman will not do, or stoop to do, under the influence of a great Passion?

(Pic. 44).

LODOVICO IS SURPRISED AT OTHELLO'S HARSH CONDUCT.

LOD : Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in-all sufficient ?¹ Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake ?² whose solid virtue
The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
Could neither graze nor pierce ?³

IAGO : He is much chang'd.

LOD . Are his wits safe ?⁴ Is he not light of brain ?⁵

IAGO . He's that he is ;⁶ I may not breathe my censure
What he might be⁷ ; if what he might, he is not,
I would to Heaven he were !⁸

LOD : What ! strike his wife !

IAGO : 'Faith, that was not so well ; yet, would I knew
That stroke would prove the worst !⁹

LOD . Is it his use ?¹⁰
Or, did the letters work upon his blood,¹¹
And new create¹² this fault ?

IAGO : Alas, alas !
It is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him,¹³
And his own courses¹⁴ will denote¹⁵ him, so
That I may save my speech.¹⁶ Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.¹⁷

LOD . I am sorry that I am deceiv'd¹⁸ in him.

[Exit.

1. All-in-all sufficient : thoroughly competent in all respects. 2. Is this.shake ? : is this the person (noted for his strength of mind) who could not be easily swayed by any kind of emotion or passion ? 3. Whose.....pierce ? : his qualities were of such a sterling and enduring character that he would not be easily affected by any change (or, sudden and violent happening) ; (i. e. he would face all emergent or unlooked-for occurrences without getting nervous.) 4. Wits safe ? . senses steady ? 5. Light of brain ? . weak-minded ? 6. He's.....is : he is what he is ; (I cannot explain it any further than what we find him now to be.) 7. I may.be I may not even whisper my opinion as to what he might potentially be or become. He means, that he being Othello's subordinate, it is not safe for him to express his opinion about him even in secret. 8. If what.. ...were . if he is now not what he might (be) or ought to be, then I pray to God that he were as he should be. 9. Would I worst : prose order is, '(I) would (that) I knew that—'. This means, 'I wish that I knew that this stroke was the utmost or the last'. 10. Use habit. 11. Work.....blood excite or irritate him. 12. New create : newly created, or produced for the first time. 13. You shall observe him . (i.e., for yourself.) 14. Courses acts. 15. Denote : reveal. 16. May save my speech. will not have to speak (about it.) 17. Continues : continues to behave in future. 18. Deceiv'd . disappointed.

Othello questions Emilia closely, but would not be convinced, as in his present state of mind, he is not open to conviction.



(1) To the jaundiced eye, everything looks yellow.

(2) Passion, Prejudice, or Superstition, turns Virtues into Vices,—proofs of Innocence into proofs of Guilt.

(Pic. 45.)

SCENE II. A ROOM IN THE CASTLE.

Enter Othello and Emilia.

O'THELLO QUESTIONS EMILIA ABOUT DESDEMONA'S CONDUCT

OTH : You have seen nothing, then ?

EMI : Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.

OTH . Yes,¹ you have seen Cassio and her together ?

EMI : But then I saw no harm, and then I heard each syllable that breath made up between them.²

OTH : What ! did they never whisper ?

EMI . Never, My lord.

OTH Nor send you out o' the way ?

EMI Never.

OTH . To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing³ ?

EMI : Never, my lord.

OTH : That's strange.

EMI : I durst,⁴ my lord, to wager⁵ she is honest, lay down my soul at stake :⁶ if you think other,⁷ remove your thought ; it doth abuse your bosom.⁸ If any wretch⁹ have put this in your head, let Heaven requite it with the serpent's curse !¹⁰ For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true, there's no man happy ;¹¹ the purest of their wives is foul as slander.¹²

OTH : Bid her come hither ; go. (Exit Emilia) She says enough : yet, she's a simple bawd¹³ that cannot say as much.¹⁴ This is a subtle¹⁵ whore, a closet lock-and-key of villainous secrets ;¹⁶ and yet she'll kneel and pray ;¹⁷ I have seen her do't.

1. Yes : it may be so, but('But' is understood before 'you'.)
2. That.....them : that was breathed or spoken by them. 3. Nor nothing : or anything else. 4. Durst : make myself bold. 5. Wager : bet (that). 6. Lay.....stake : I will readily stake or risk my soul or life (on her honesty). 7. Other : otherwise ; or, in any other way than this. 8. It.....bosom : it is wrong for you to harbour such a thought in your bosom. 9. Wretch : villain. 10. Let ...curse : let God punish him with all sufferings and sorrows. ('Serpent's curse' : this is an allusion to the Biblical story, in which God cursed Adam and Eve for disobeying His command not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge by expelling them from the Garden of Eden and punishing Eve to bear children in great suffering ; also, He cursed the serpent for tempting Eve, by ordering that it should crawl on its belly and eat the dust of the earth) 11. There's.....happy : there is no husband happy (i. e. secure in the belief of his wife's chastity ; this means, 'in that case, every woman is impure.'). 12. Foul as slander : (as) wicked as slander or calumny can picture. 13. A simple bawd . a foolish procuress or go-between. 14. Thatmuch that is not able to say as much. 15. Subtle . cunning. 16. A closetsecrets : one who will keep wicked secrets very closely, (as a close-fitting key to a lock.) 17. Sha... ..pray . she will keep up the pretence of piety by kneeling and praying.

Othello's strange behaviour towards Desdemona.



Chastity or Virtue is not *always* its own shield.

(Pic. 46.)

EMILIA BRINGS IN DESDEMONA AS ORDERED
OTHELLO'S STRANGE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS DESDEMONA.

DES : My lord, what is your will ?

OTH : Pray, chuck, come hither.

DES : What is your pleasure ?

OTH . Let me see your eyes ; look in my face.

DES : What horrible fancy's this ?¹

OTH : (To Emilia.) Some of your function,² mistress ; leave procreants³ alone, and shut the door ; cough, or cry 'hem', if anybody come ; your mystery,⁴ your mystery ; nay, dispatch.⁵
(Exit Emilia.)

DES : (Kneels) Upon my knees, what doth your speech import ?⁶ I understand a fury in your words, but not the words.⁷

OTH . Why, what art thou ?

DES . Your wife, my lord ; your true and loyal wife. (Rises)

OTH : Come, swear it, damn thyself ;⁸ lest, being like one of Heaven, the devils themselves should fear to seize thee ;⁹ therefore be double-damn'd ;¹⁰ swear thou art honest !

DES . Heaven doth truly know it.

OTH : Heaven truly knows that thou art false as Hell.

DES : To whom, my lord ? with whom ? how am I false ?

OTH . O ! Desdemona ! away ! away ! away ! (weeps.)

DES : Alas, the heavy day !¹¹ Why do you weep ? Am I the motive¹² of these tears, my lord ? If haply you my father do suspect an instrument¹³ of this your calling back, lay not your blame on me ; if you have lost him, why, I have lost him too.¹⁴

1. What. . . this ? what fearful or strange idea is this ? (That is, your behaviour is unusual.) 2 Some of your function . (attend to) some of your duties. 3. Procreants . breeders or generators ; i. e. married couple 4. Mystery originally, this word meant a trade, calling or profession the inner working of which was kept a secret Here it means only 'duty'. Before 'Mystery' 'attend to' should be understood. 5 Dispatch . go out quickly. 6 Import signify or mean. 7. I ... words by the way you speak, I can see you are angry ; but, I cannot grasp what you mean. 8 Swear .. thyself : if you swear or affirm it (i.e. your loyalty), then you are damning or condemning yourself 9. Lest..... thee : otherwise, [i.e.—if you do not damn (by revealing) yourself] having a look of angelic purity and innocence, you defy even the devils from approaching you. (The meaning is, your purity is a pretence exceeding that of the devils themselves.) 10. Therefore be double-damn'd . because you are a devil itself so full of pretence, you require to be doubly (i.e. irredeemably) condemned. 11. The heavy day the day full of sorrow. 12. Motive mover i.e. cause 13. Instrument means. (The suspicion, she thinks, might fall on her father as he was a member of the Senate). 14. If youtoo if you have lost all regard for him, I too have lost it. (Do not think that, being his daughter, I will be in sympathy with what he is suspected to have done.)

Othello's pathetic lament, followed by his angry outburst against Desdemona: Emilia is looking on.



OTH: { "Had it pleased Heaven to try me with affliction,
I should have found a drop of patience; but, alas!,"

(Pic. 47.)

Othello's pathetic lament, followed by his outbursts against Desdemona.

OTH : Had it pleased Heaven
 To try me with affliction¹ ; had He rain'd²
 All kinds of sores and shames³ on my bare head ;
 Steep'd⁴ me in poverty to the very lips ;
 Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes ;⁵
 I should have found, in some place of my soul,
 A drop of patience But, alas, to make me
 A fixed figure for the time of scorn
 To point his slow and moving finger at !⁶
 Yet could I bear that too, well, very well ;
 But there,⁷ —where I have garner'd up⁸ my heart,
 Where either I must live or bear no life,—
 The fountain from the which my current runs,
 Or else dries up,—to be discarded⁹ thence !
 Or, keep¹⁰ it as a cistern¹¹ for foul toads
 To knot and gender in !¹² Turn thy complexion there,
 Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,
 Ay, there, look grim as hell !¹³

DES : I hope my noble lord esteems¹⁴ me honest.

OTH : O, ay, as summer flies are in the shambles,
 That quicken even with blowing.¹⁵ O, thou weed !¹⁶
 Who art so lovely fair and smell'st so sweet
 That the sense aches at thee :¹⁷ would, thou hadst ne'er been born!

1. Affliction . suffering. 2 Rain'd : showered or dropped. 3. Sores and shames . diseases and disgraces 4. Steep'd . submerged (made me extremely poor) 5. Given.. hopes . made me a captive or prisoner without any hope (of escape) 6 To make meat (if God had chosen) to make me a permanent object of ridicule and disgrace by all people during all time. (*Time* is here personified or treated as a Person of Scorn as, in other places, it is represented as a Person of Death, holding a mowing sickle in his hand Slow and moving finger : a finger always pointing to me and moving as I move) 7. There . refers to the particular object of his affections i. e. Desdemona. 8. Garn'ered up . treasured. (Two different and successive metaphors are used here,—the garner and the fountain) 9. Discarded . thrown out or rejected 10. Or, keep . or, to keep. 11. Cistern . cess-pool, or, dirty low ground. 12. To knot and gender in . live in groups and breed therein. (Here the idea is that the object of his affections, where he had centred all his life, has now become loathsome because of the lustful use of it by others.) 13. Turn thy.... as hell . Patience is here personified as a lovely angel, rose-lipped or pink-faced, ie. blooming with health. Othello asks her to change her color and character, and become a violent, impatient, and hellish-looking being. (Othello means that as his wife has become impure, so, then, away with all peace and patience.) 14. Esteems . regards. 15. O, aye, as summer.... with blowing . O, yes, I deem you as honest as summer flies are in the shambles (or, the place where the butchers' meat is sold, ie , in the flesh market ;) even there they quicken (live and breed) with blowing (or, fouling and swelling with eggs.) The idea is 'that there is not much honesty or conjugal fidelity in you ; it is as rare in you as in summer flies who promiscuously pair off and breed even in dirty places'. 16. Weed : here it means a flower or a poisonous herb, as good-looking and sweet smelling as a genuine flower. 17. The sense aches at thee . the constant sight and smell of you (social intercourse or company with you) produces much pain.

DES Alas, what ignorant¹ sin have I committed ?

OTH : Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write ' whore ' upon ?² What committed !
Committed ! O thou public commoner³
I should make very forges of my cheeks,⁴
That would to cinders burn up modesty,⁵
Did⁶ I but speak thy deeds. What committed !

Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks ;
The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it.⁷ What committed !
Impudent strumpet !⁸

DES By Heaven, you do me wrong.

OTH Are not you a strumpet ?

DES : No, as I am a Christian :
If to preserve this vessel⁹ for my lord
From any other foul unlawful touch
Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

OTH What, not a whore ?

DES . No, as I shall be saved

OTH Is't possible ?

DES : O Heaven, forgive us !

1. Ignorant unconscious, unknowing. 2. Was this.....whore upon Desdemona is here compared to a pure and white paper or a holy book of such paper which, instead of being used for a good or pure purpose, is used for a foul and obscene one. 3. Commoner. a common or loose woman 4. Forges of my cheeks The meaning is, my mouth will then be like a furnace, the fire of which is fanned by the blast of the cheeks which will serve as the bellows. 5. That would . . modesty my mouth (acting as a furnace,) would then destroy or burn up thy modesty to cinders or ashes ; (i.e., If I were to speak of thy foul and adulterous deeds, thy modesty or innocence will be shattered to shreds.) 6. Did if (I) did. 7. Heaven stops . . hear it. several metaphors are here used to emphasize the feeling of disgust ; your act is so shameless, striking and abominable that God will stop or turn away His nose at its foul stench ; the moon will not look openly, but will blush and wink at it ; and even the wanton indifferent wind, which blows freely on the good as well as on the bad, will hide itself in some hole under-ground, rather than hear the name of such an act as you are guilty of, i.e. the very elements will be shocked by such an act. 8. What committed.....strumpet Othello's raving and evasive reply to Desdemona's simple question, "Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?" shows how completely he has been over-powered by his suspicion. He mocks at her question, repeating several times the phrase, 'what committed'. and indulging in the vilest abuse against her by calling her 'impudent strumpet',—impudent, because of her audacity in pretending ignorance of the guilty act. 9. Vessel . body.

OTH : I cry you mercy then:¹

I took you for that cunning² whore of Venice
That married with Othello. (shouting for Emilia.)
You, mistress, that have the office, opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell !³ (Re-enter Emilia).

OTH . (To Emil.) You, you, ay, you !⁴

We have done our course ;⁵ there's money for your pains:⁶
I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel. (Exit)

EMIL . Alas, what does this gentleman conceive ?⁷

How do you, madam ? how do you, my good lady ?

DES . ' Faith, half asleep.

EMIL : Good madam, what's the matter with my lord ?

DES . With who ?

EMIL . Why, with my lord, madam.

DES . Who is thy lord ?

EMIL He that is yours, sweet lady.

DES : I have none ; do not talk to me, Emilia ;

I cannot weep, nor answer have I none,
But what should go by water.⁸ Prithee, to-night
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets remember ;
And call thy husband hither.

EMIL : Here's a change indeed !

[Exit

DES . ' Tis meet I should be used so,⁹ very meet.

How have I been behaved, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my least misuse ?¹⁰

1. I cry you mercy then in that case, I also beg for mercy or pardon for you from God. 2. Cunning · artful, intriguing. 3. The office . . . of Hell : the office or charge of the gate-keeper of Hell, as opposed to that of Saint Peter (with his bunch of keys) guarding the gate of Heaven. 4. You.....you ! · Othello holds Emilia guilty of being a procuress and is now emphasising the fact in a round-about but contemptuous manner,—' you, you, ay, you ! ' 5. We have done our course : We (i. e. Othello and Desdemona) have finished our life's journey. 6. There's.....pains etc., etc. : he offers and gives her money, for her past services as his wife's maid servant, with the request to her to shut the door behind him and keep the matter a secret : so advising, he goes out, leaving Desdemona dazed and Emilia surprised. 7. Conceive · think. imagine. 8. I cannot weep.....water . my heart is too sorely charged with sorrow for tears or weeping, and hence I cannot weep ; nor have I any answer to you or your question but an answer that must be expressed by tears ; I cannot shed tears which might give me relief ; and yet the only fit answer to your question will be ' tears ' for my unhappy condition or melancholy fate. (' Go by water ' is an expression now out of use). 9. ' Tis meet.....so : It is proper that I should be so treated or dealt with. 10. How have I.....misuse ? : on first thought, after Emilia's departure, she rebukes herself for her shortcomings ; but on second thought, or on self analysis, she asks herself this question, ' but how have I behaved or conducted myself that he should entertain (or fasten) the slightest ill-opinion of me for the least (slightest) error, if any that I may have ignorantly committed.

Emilia, surprised at the change, calls Iago in; Desdemona weeps and Emilia denounces slanderers.



O cruel Fate! to be discarded or betrayed by one for whom you have sacrificed your all.

(Pic. 48.)

Emilia calls in Iago; Desdemona weeps ; and Emilia denounces Slanderers.

IAGO : What is your pleasure, madam ? How is it with you ?

DES . I cannot tell Those that do teach young babes do it with gentle means and easy tasks ; he might have chid me so ; for, in good faith, I am a child to chiding. (i. e. to be chidden or scolded)

IAGO : What's the matter, lady ?

EMI : Alas ! Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,¹ thrown such despite and heavy terms² upon her, as true hearts cannot bear.

DES : Am I that name, Iago ?

IAGO . What name, fair lady ?

DES . Such as she says my lord did say I was.

EMI He call'd her whore ; a beggar in his drink could not have laid such terms upon his callet. (mistress, lewd woman)

IAGO . Why did he so ?

DES . I do not know ; I am sure I am none such. (weeping)

IAGO . Do not weep, do not weep Alas the day !

EMI : Hath she forsook so many noble matches,³ her father, and her country, and her friends, to be call'd *whore* ? Would it not make one weep ?

DES : It is my wretched fortune. (fate)

EMI : I will be hang'd, if some eternal⁴ villain, some busy and insinuating rogue,⁵ some cogging⁶ cozening⁷ slave, to get some office, have not devis'd this slander ; I'll be hang'd else.

IAGO : Fie ! there is no such man ; it is impossible.

DES . If any such there be, Heaven pardon him !

EMI : A halter pardon him, and hell gnaw his bones !⁸ Why should he call her whore ? who keeps her company ? what place ? what time ? what form ? what likelihood ?⁹ The Moor's abus'd (misled) by some most villanous knave, some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.¹⁰ (Raising her voice in anger) O, Heaven ! that such companions thou'dst unfold,¹¹ and put in every honest hand a whip to lash the rascals naked through the world, even from the East to the West !

IAGO : Speak within door. (i.e. softly, that others may not hear)

EMI : O ! fie upon them ! Some such squire¹² he was that turn'd your wit the seamy side without,¹³ and made you to suspect me with the Moor.

IAGO : You are a fool ; go to.

1. Bewhor'd her : abused her by calling her a whore. 2. Despite..... terms : spiteful and grievous or foul expressions. 3. Noble matches : proposals of marriage with aristocrats or noblemen. 4. Eternal : infernal. 5. Some..... rogue : some meddlesome and smooth-tongued rogue. 6. Cogging : wheedling or deceiving. 7. Cozening . coaxing to defraud ; (derived from cousin, claiming kinship to cheat people.) 8. A halter.....bones : a halter is a strap or rope for leading horses, here a rope for hanging malefactors,—meaning, 'He should rather be hanged than pardoned and his body and bones burned in Hell-fire'. 9. What form ?... ..likelihood ? what appearance or sign is there of it, and how probable or worthy of belief is it ? 10. Base.....fellow . low and infamous knave, loathsome, and contemptible fellow. 11. O ! Heaven.....unfold : O God, I pray that Thou wouldst unfold or reveal such scoundrels. 12. Squire : gallant (used ironically.) 13. That.....without : that turned your head the wrong way about.

Desdemona, in her innocence, appeals to Iago, the author of her downfall.



How oft, in Life's history, has not Innocence, in her need, confided in the very Devil that has planned and worked her ruin ?

DESDEMONA APPEALS TO IAGO WHO ADVISES PATIENCE

DES : O good Iago,
 What shall I do to win my lord again ?
 Good friend, go to him ; for, by this light of Heaven,¹
 I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel
 If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
 Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,²
 Or that³ mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
 Delighted them in any other form,⁴
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will,—though he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,
 Comfort forswear me !⁵ Unkindness may do much ;
 And his unkindness may defeat my life,
 But never taint my love.⁶ I cannot say⁷ *whore* ;
 It doth abhor me now I speak the word,⁸
 To do the act that might the addition earn
 Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.⁹

IAGO I pray you, be content ; 'tis but his humour¹⁰
 The business of the State does him offence,¹¹
 And he does chide with¹² you.

DES . If 'twere no other,—

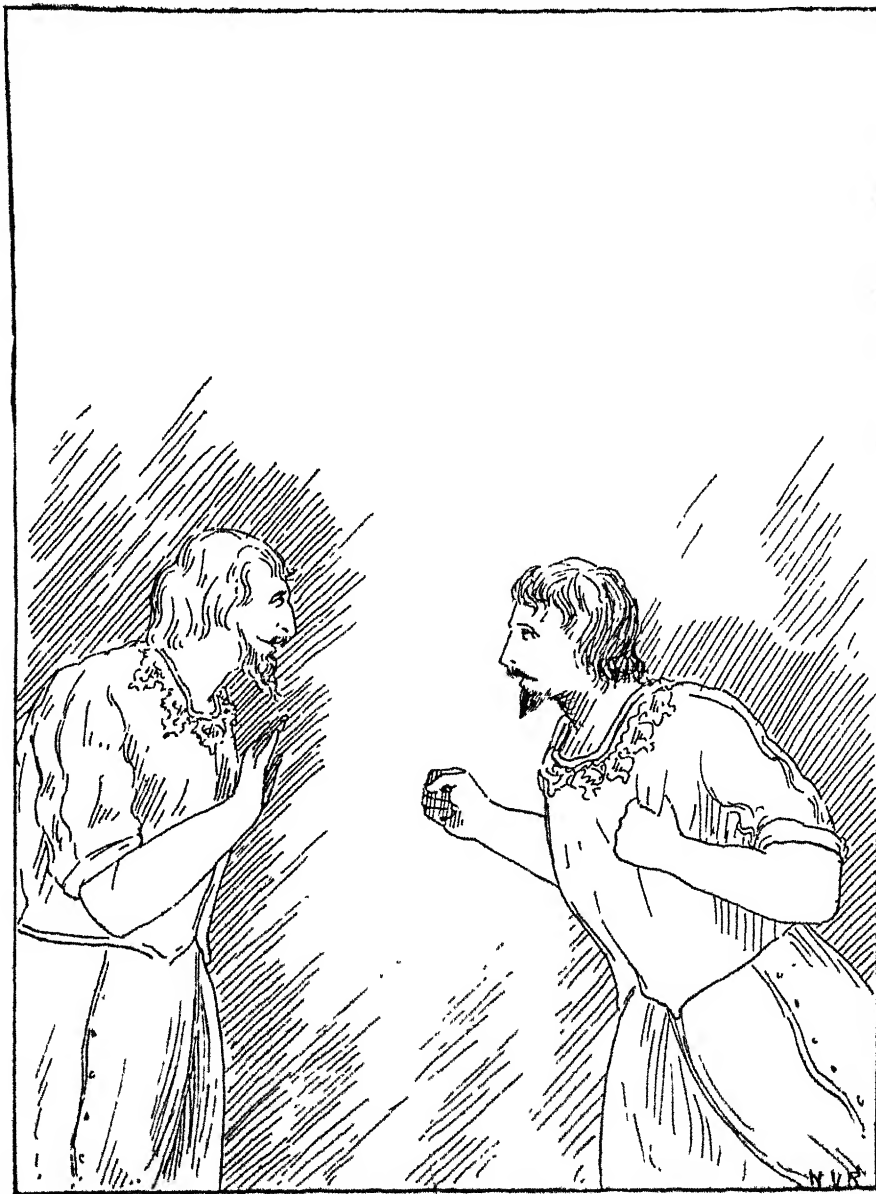
IAGO . 'Tis but so, I warrant.¹³ [Trumpets within.
 Hark ! how these instruments summon to supper !
 The messengers of Venice stay the meat¹⁴
 Go in, and weep not ; all things shall be well

[Exit Desdemona and Emilia.]

1. By... Heaven : in the name of the sun that shines in the sky ; (this is a form of swearing) 2. If e'er... deed : if at any time I misconducted myself against him either by thought or deed 3. That if. 4. Delighted... form : took pleasure in any other person. (Them themselves). 5. Or, that... forswear me : although he might discard me by divorce which might make me a beggar (in the world), yet I shall continue to love him dearly, as I do now and did in the past ; (if I do not do so,) let comfort depart from me. (forswear : renounce upon oath). 6. Unkindness...love : ill-will may always lead to misery ; and his ill-will towards me may deprive me of all that I hold precious in my life ; but it cannot stain and lessen my love for him. 7. 'Say' and 'speak' in the next line mean 'utter'. 8. It....word : now (that) I utter the word, it is abhorrent or repulsive to me. 9. To do...make me : Prose order is 'Not the world's...me, to do the act that might earn the addition'; Meaning: not even the flattering compliment of the whole world could induce me to (stoop) to do the (shameful) act, which might get for me the title or name (of a 'whore.')

10. Humour : ill-humour ; or fretful mood 11. Does him offence . has offended or upset him. 12. With : used for the sake of meter only 13. Warrant : guarantee or assure. 14. Stay the meat : wait for supper.

A scene between the simpleton Roderigo, and the villain Iago.



How the cunning Devil preaches to his clients the virtues of Patience and Content, while he is really robbing them all the time !

(Pic. 50)

A SCENE BETWEEN RODERIGO THE SIMPLETON, AND IAGO THE VILLAIN.

- (1) The Fool is ever fleeced ;
- (2) The Villain for ever wins the game ;
- (3) Cassio's murder, urged and agreed to.

IAGO : How now, Roderigo !

ROD : I do not find that thou deal'st justly with me.¹

IAGO : What in the contrary ?²

ROD : Every day, thou daff'st me with some device,³ Iago ; and rather, as it seems to me now, keep'st from me all convenience,⁴ than suppliest me with the least advantage⁵ of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it ; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.⁶

IAGO : Will you hear me, Roderigo ?

ROD : ' Faith, I have heard too much , for, your words and performances are no kin together.⁷

IAGO : You charge⁸ me most unjustly.

ROD . With nought but truth.⁹ I have wasted myself out of my means.¹⁰ The jewels, you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a votarist :¹¹ you have told me she has received them, and returned¹² me expectations and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance ;¹³ but I find none

IAGO : Well ; go to ;¹⁴ very well.

ROD : Very well ! go to ! I cannot go to, man ; nor 'tis not very well. Nay, I think, it is very scurvy,¹⁵ and begin to find myself fopped¹⁶ in it.

IAGO : Very well.

1. That.....me. that you are acting fairly to me. 2. What in the contrary ? What is there in the contrary ? What have I done against you ? 3. Daff'st device (you) doff or put me off with some excuse or plea. 4. Convenience . convenience ; (i. e.) convenient or suitable chances (of meeting Desdemona.) 5. Advantage . occasion. (What Roderigo means is that Iago has given him much hope but little chance for its fulfilment.) 6. Nor amsuffered : and I am not going to patiently submit to you as I have hitherto foolishly done. 7. Your words.....together : your words and deeds do not coincide ; i. e. they differ widely. (You do not act as you say.) 8. Charge : accuse. 9. With nought but truth (I do not charge you) with anything that is not true. 10. I have.....means . I have wasted all my means or money. 11. Corrupted a votarist . tempted a pious person or a saint. 12. Returned : has returned. 13. Expectations.....acquaintance : hopes and pleasures of an unexpected (i. e., early) regard and friendship. 14. Go to . a phrase of exclamation, used sometimes seriously and at other times ironically ; it is the same as " Come, come". 15. Scurvy : dirty and mean. 16. Fopped . fooled or deceived.

ROD: I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona;¹ if she will return me my jewels, I will give over² my suit,³ and repent my unlawful solicitation;⁴ if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you⁵

IAGO: You have said now⁶

ROD: Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.⁷

Iago now changes his tactics and resorts to Flattery which succeeds.

IAGO: Why, now I see, there's mettle⁸ in thee, and even from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion⁹ than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo; thou hast taken against me a most just exception;¹⁰ but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly¹¹ in thy affair.

ROD: It hath not appeared.¹²

IAGO: I grant, indeed, it hath not appeared, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment.¹³ But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,—this night, show it: if thou, the next night following, enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.¹⁴

ROD: Well, what is it? Is it within reason and compass?¹⁵

IAGO: Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

ROD: Is that true? Why, then, Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Cassio's murder urged and agreed to.

IAGO: O, no, he goes into Mauritania,¹⁶ and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here¹⁷ by some accident: wherein, none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.¹⁸

1. I will.....Desdemona: I shall disclose all these facts to Desdemona. 2. Give over; give up or abandon. 3. Suit: courting. 4. Repent.....solicitation: express my sorrow for my improper courting. 5. If not.....you: if she does not do so (i. e. return my jewels,) be sure you will have to satisfy me (by returning them to me or paying for them.) 6. Now: enow or enough; you have said enough; (i. e., have you anything more to say?) 7. Protest.....doing: affirm or assert to be my intention to do. 8. Mettle: spirit. 9. Do.....opinion: I form a better opinion of you. 10. Thou hast.....exception: (under the circumstances) you were right in charging me thus. 11. Directly: straight-forwardly. 12. Appeared: been clearly shown. 13. Wit and judgment: wisdom and reason; i. e. sensible. 14. Take me.....life: isolate or cut me off from the world by cunning means, and then plan methods for ending my life. 15. What is it.....compass?: what do you mean? Is all that you say (about Desdemona) reasonable and achievable? 16. Mauritania: Othello's native country. 17. Unless.....here: unless he is compelled to stay here. 18. Wherein.....Cassio: in which (accident or case) nothing will be so important as the removal of Cassio. (Iago means Cassio's murder.)

ROD : How do you mean, removing of him ?

IAGO : Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place,—
knocking out his brains.

ROD : And that you would have me to do ?¹

IAGO : Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right.² He sups to-night with a harlotry,³ and thither will I go to him. He knows not yet of his honorable fortune⁴ If you will watch his going thence,—which I will fashion to fall out⁵ between twelve and one,—you may take him at your pleasure.⁶ I will be near to second⁷ your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amazed at⁸ it, but go along with me ; I will show you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him.⁹ It is now high¹⁰ supper-time, and the night grows to waste,¹¹ about it.¹²

ROD : I will hear further reason¹³ for this.

IAGO And you shall be satisfied.

[Exit.

1. And that . . . do ? and do you wish me to undertake that task ?
2. Ay. . . right : certainly, if you have got the courage to reap an advantage and assert your right (then, you must undertake it.) 3. Harlotry . harlot, or a loose woman or a strumpet. 4. Honorable fortune (i.e.) his appointment as the Governor of Cyprus in the place of Othello. 5. Fashion to fall out . arrange to occur. 6 Take . . . pleasure attack him conveniently 7 Second : help. 8. Amazed at . terrified at. 9. I will . . . on him . I shall explain to you how urgently necessary his death is , so much so that you yourself will consider it your duty to do it. 10. High . quite or fully. 11. Grows to waste . is fast advancing. 12. About it . let us go about it ; (i.e.) let us be prepared for it. 13. Reason : explanation.

Desdemona and Emilia, talk about the unchastity of men and women.



"If wives do fall, it is often the fault of their husbands."

But a really Chaste Woman would not sacrifice her Chastity for the whole world.

(Pic. 51.)

SCENE III. A Bed-chamber in the Castle.

DESDEMONA AND EMILIA,—ON THE UNCHASTITY ON MEN AND WOMEN.

DES . O, these men, these men !¹

Dost thou in conscience² think,—tell me Emilia,—that there be women do abuse their husbands in such gross kind ?³

EMI . There be some such, no question.⁴

DES : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?⁵

EMI : Why, would not you ?

DES No, by this Heavenly light !⁶

EMI . Nor I neither by this Heavenly light ; I might do 't as well i' the dark.

DES : Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world ?

EMI : The world's a huge thing.⁷ it is a great price for a small vice.⁸

DES . In troth,⁹ I think thou wouldst not.

EMI . In troth, I think I should ; and undo't when I had done.¹⁰ Marry ! I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring,¹¹ nor for measures of lawn,¹² nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition¹³ but, for the whole world,¹⁴—why, who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch ?¹⁵ I should venture purgatory for 't.¹⁶

1. O, these.....men : so imperfect,—said by way of pity 2. In conscience : honestly. 3. That.....kind . whether there are such women as abuse (or prove false to) their husbands in such a foul manner (The very question indicates how innocent Desdemona is about the ways of the world). 4 No question . no doubt; or certainly. 5. For all the world (even) if you were to gain all the wordly possessions. 6. Heavenly light a holy form of swearing. Emilia plays upon the word 'light,' by which she means 'openly.' 7 The world . ..thing : the whole earth or globe is too big a thing to be considered in connection with this question. 8. It is.....vice Emilia means that 'if a slight wicked deed can lead to a huge reward or profit, who would not do it ?' (The same idea is expressed in the saying that 'the end justifies the means' and it is adopted as a wise maxim in the practical politics of the world). 9. In troth . in truth, or really. 10. And.....done : and having done it, I would make it appear as if I had not done it, or morally justify it on some grounds. 11. Joint-ring . an (ordinary) wedding ring. 12. Measures of lawn : little plots of ground. 13. Petty exhibition : small monetary allowance or reward. 14. For.world : if the prize or reward is to be the whole world, (as contrasted with the petty things mentioned above). 15. Who would.....monarch . who would not play false to her husband, if by doing so, she can make him a monarch (of the whole world). 16. I should.....for 't : I am prepared to go even to Hell for it, after having obtained and enjoyed the world during this life.

DES: Beshrew¹ me, if I would do such a wrong for the whole world.

EMI: Why, the wrong is but a wrong in the world; and having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.²

If Women prove unchaste, whose fault is it?

DES: I do not think there is any such woman.

EMI: Yes, a dozen,³ and as many to the vantage⁴
As would store the world they played for.⁵

But, I do think, it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall.⁶ say,⁷ that they slack⁸ their duties
And pour our treasures into foreign laps;⁹
Or else break out in pceevish jealousies,
Throwing restraint upon us;¹⁰ or say, they strike¹¹ us,
Or scant¹² our former having in despite:
Why,¹³ we have galls;¹⁴ and, though we have some grace,
Yet have we some revenge.¹⁵

Let husbands know,
Their wives have sense¹⁶ like them; they see and smell
And have their palates¹⁷ both for sweet and sour,
As husbands have.

1. Beshrew · hate, shun or curse. 2. Why the wrong is.....right · Emilia justifies the wrong deed by arguments which are forced but practical for worldly purposes. She means that "the wicked deed is such only in the world; and, if the world is to be yours, it is done in your own world; and therefore it is easy for you to make it appear right by justifying it." 3. Dozen many. 4. To the vantage · in addition; besides. 5. And asfor: and there are many more in addition, who would fill the world they play for, or play their part in, by committing wicked deeds in it or for it. 6. Fall: fall from chastity; i.e. go wrong. 7. Say: suppose. 8. Slack: disregard or neglect. 9. And pour.....laps: and lavish on other women affections, favours or other privileges which are ours or should be ours by the sacred bond of wedlock. 10. Or else.....upon us: or otherwise, they quarrel with us out of mean and fretful jealousy, and restrict our movements. 11. Strike: beat. 12. Scant.....despite: curtail our old having (or possession or allowances) out of spite. 13. Why: the result is; or, what follows then? 14. We have galls: we too have got tempers, ('gall' is the bile which, if excessive, upsets one's temper i.e. makes one pceevish etc.) 15. Though.....revenge: though by nature we may have grace (i.e. we may be soft and forgiving.) yet we too are not free from the revengeful spirit to some extent. (That is, if they play us false and treat us unjustly, then we too retort and do the same to them.) 16. Sense: feeling or sensation. 17. Palates: tastes. (The idea here is somewhat similar to that expressed by Shylock in 'The Merchant of Venice', a representative of the persecuted race of that time.)

What is it that they do
When they change us for others ?¹ Is it sport ?²
I think it is : and doth affection breed it ?³
I think it doth. Is't frailty that thus errs ?⁴

It is so too.⁵ And⁶ have not we affections,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have ?
Then let them use us well ;⁷ else let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.⁸

DES Good night, good night ! Heaven me such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend !⁹ * [Exit Emilia.]

Note . This topic of talk between Desdemona and Emilia is detached and placed here separately as being more appropriate than at the end of their conversation at page 288

1. Change us for others . exchange us for others ; i. e. neglect us and run after others. 2 Sport : fun or playful spirit. 3. And .. it ? Or, does love produce it ? (i.e. the changing of us for others.) ('and' here means 'or'). 4. Is't .. .errs ? is it the result of human weakness which leads to such errors ? (Emilia means that the sporting spirit and the affection referred to are the results of weakness, common to both sexes.) 5. Too : i.e. with us too. 6. And : For 7. Use us well . deal with us justly 8. Elseso otherwise, let them know that the wrongs we commit, we learn from their wrongs. (That is, they set the example and we follow.) 9. Heaven.....mend : Prose order . '(May) Heaven send me such uses (as) not to pick bad from bad, but mend (myself) by bad.' The meaning is 'may God give me such uses (i. e. opportunities, usage or temperament) which will enable me rather to mend (i.e. correct and improve) myself from the wicked things of this world, than to pick (i. e. learn or draw) bad lessons from the wicked deeds of others.

*What a sublime character is Desdemona ! What a high ideal she holds for mankind ! It is through such ideals that the average humanity with all its meaner instincts and baser passions is at times softly and slowly raised to higher levels.

We note the contrast between the two women, Emilia and Desdemona. The one is a plain, vulgar, experienced, shrewd woman of the world, an opportunist or time-server, and yet possessed of some noble impulses and emotions which come into play at the sight of villainy, glaring injustice or outrage ; while the other is a pure, noble-minded, unsophisticated girl, totally inexperienced in the ways of the world, with child-like innocence and simplicity,—almost a simpleton at times, with more charity than wisdom, prudence or intelligence. The one would not shrink from committing wrong or wicked deeds if profitable to herself, or from retaliating in case of ill-treatment by her husband ; while the other would not think of doing any wrong or injustice to any one and is ever chaste in conduct, pure in speech, and charitable in thought. Her thoughts and ideals are immeasurably higher, purer, nobler than Emilia's.

Desdemona tells Emilia of the presentiment of her death, in her bed-chamber, after Othello's order to her to go to bed.



How thrilled are we by the sublime devotion of a faithful wife to her husband, and *vice versa*, even in the face of death!

(Pic. 52.)

Enter Othello, Lodovico, Desdemona, Emilia and Attendants.

Desdemona and Emilia are alone in the Bed-Chamber : Desdemona's presentiment of her death and her song.

LOD : I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.¹

OTH : O, pardon me : 'twill do me good to walk.

LOD Madam, good night ; I humbly thank your ladyship.

DES : Your Honour is most welcome.

OTH Will you walk, sir ?—O,—Desdemona,—

DES My lord ?

OTH Get you to bed on the instant.² I will be return'd³ forth-with dismiss your attendant there ; look it be done.⁴

DES I will, my lord. [Exit Othello, Lodovico, and Attendants.]

Desdemona and Emilia retire into the Bed-chamber.

EMIL : How goes it now ?⁵ he looks gentler than he did.

DES : He says he will return incontinent.⁶
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

EMIL : Dismiss me !

DES : It was his bidding ; therefore, good Emilia,
Give me my nightly wearing,⁷ and adieu ;
We must not now displease him.

EMIL : I would you had never seen him !

DES : So would not I ;⁸ my love doth so approve⁹ him,
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns,—
Prithee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.¹⁰

EMIL : I've laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

DES . All's one.¹¹

1. Trouble..... further : (after supper, Lodovico takes leave to go, and asks Othello not to trouble himself by following him or seeing him off, through courtesy)
2. On the instant : instantly ; or, at once. 3. I will be returned : I will return.
4. Look't be done : see that you do as I bid you. 5. How goes it now ? : how does it happen so ? or, what has brought about this (change in Othello) ?
6. Incontinent : immediately. 7. Nightly wearing : night-wearing ; or, sleeping dress. 8. So would not I : I would not wish so (i. e. in the same way as you wish). 9. Approve : regard or esteem. 10. That even.....in them . that (even his defects, such as) his obstinacy, his restraints or forbiddings (to me) and his angry looks, are graceful to me. 11. All's one : it is the same to me ; (I am indifferent about it.)

Desdemona's presentiment of her death.

DES: Good faith, how foolish are our minds!
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud¹ me
In one of those same sheets.

EMIL: Come, come, you talk.²

DES: My mother had a maid call'd Barbara:
She was in love; and he she loved proved³ mad,
And did forsake her. she had a song of 'willow';
An old thing⁴ 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,⁵
And she died singing it. That song to-night
Will not go from my mind; I've much to-do
But⁶ to go hang my head all at one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. * *

(Sings).

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;⁷
Her⁸ hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing⁹ willow, willow, willow:
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones—
* * * *

But hark! who is 't that knocks¹⁰?

EMIL: It's the wind.

DES: (Sings).

I call'd my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow:—

If I court more women, you'll couch with more men.¹¹

So, get thee gone: good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode¹² weeping?

EMIL: 'Tis neither here nor there.¹³ * * *

[Note Here follows, in the original text, the conversation between Desdemona and Emilia about the unchastity of men and women; but it is detached and treated of separately in pages 283-84-85.]

1. Shroud wrap; (this refers to the covering of a dead body generally with a white cloth). 2 You talk: you talk nonsense. 3. Prov'd: became. 4. Thing: song. 5 Fortune: misfortune, or, unhappy fate. 6. I have much to do but: I have not much to do except etc. 7. Sing.... willow: singing all about a green willow. (A willow is a tree whose branches hang downwards; and in consequence it is called a 'weeping willow'.) 8 Her: with her. 9. Sing: (in the beginning of every other line means) singing. 10. Hark! who is't that knocks? (Desdemona's mind is disturbed and she takes the noise of the wind for Othello's knock.) 11. If Imen: If I fall in love with other women than you, then you too will carry on with other men than myself. 12. Bode: forbode; or indicate. 13. 'Tis.....there. it is nothing of that sort.

A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF

SCENE 4 OF ACT III & ACT IV.

[NOTE: The incidents described in the 4th Scene of Act III, properly belong to Act IV, and are therefore treated here.]

PART I.

On the loss of the handkerchief

Subsequent to Othello's taking a vow of revenge and Iago's promise of help and support to him, Desdemona, who is totally ignorant of their plot and who is supremely innocent in her conduct, sends for Cassio through the Clown. She desires to tell him that she has moved her lord in his behalf and that all will be well soon.

After the Clown's departure, Desdemona, who has missed the handkerchief given to her by her husband, questions Emilia about it. 'Where should I lose that handkerchief?' she asks; and Emilia utters a bare-faced lie, saying 'I know not, Madam.' Desdemona is much troubled over its loss and says,—

Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes; and, but my noble Moor
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

She and Emilia then talk about Othello's nature,—Emilia asks if he is not given to Jealousy, and Desdemona replies that, in the sunny land of his birth, people are above such petty feelings,—

I think the sun where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

In the meantime, Othello comes upon the scene. Desdemona greets him and he, in return, wishes her off-hand, but at heart he says to himself, 'O hardness to dissemble!' Not knowing the real state of his mind (which was burning with jealousy), Desdemona makes this foolish but innocent resolve,—'I will not leave him till Cassio be call'd to him'.

Then, the husband and the wife talk, bandying words with each other,—the one indirectly remarks upon her supposed unchastity, and the other directly insists upon Cassio's recall. He asks for and takes hold of her hand, and sneeringly speaks of it as 'a good hand,' 'a frank one,' 'a liberal hand' of 'a young and sweating devil,—a hand that is hot, hot and moist,' i. e. warm-blooded and lusty. Desdemona who is unable to grasp what he means by these sneers, merely answers that her hand 'yet has felt no age, nor knows no sorrow'; and that, indeed, 'it was that hand that gave away my heart;' and finally, when Othello

speaks of 'our new heraldry is hands, not hearts,' she is unable to follow him any further and simply says, 'I cannot speak of this,'

She then brings in the topic of *Cassio's restoration*. Othello evades it by pretending to be troubled with 'a salt and sorry rheum,' and asks her for *handkerchief*. She offers one, but he demands 'that which I gave you!' 'I have it not,' she replies. If so, 'that is a fault;' he says. He then dilates upon its significance and points out how it was sewed by a Sibyl who was two hundred years old, from silk produced by worms that were hallowed, and dyed in mummy used for conserving maidens' hearts. In fact,—he continues,—there was magic in the web of it; that it was given to his mother by an Egyptian charmer and thought-reader, for keeping his father subdued entirely to her love; and that if she ever lost it, his father should hold her loathed, and his spirits should hunt after new fancies. It was given to him (Othello) by his mother at the time of her death, to be given to his wife when he should marry. And, accordingly, he did so on his marriage. Therefore, he warns her,—

Take heed on't;
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose 't or give 't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.

Desdemona is amazed and asks, 'Is't possible?.....Is't true?' Othello replies, 'Most veritable; therefore, look to 't well'. Whereupon Desdemona, in her innocent fear, wishes 'Would to God, that I had never seen it!' Othello, who construes her conduct, as a deliberate pretence to cover her gift of it to Cassio, gets irritated and speaks, as Desdemona puts it, 'so startlingly and rash.' 'Ha! wherefore,' he asks, 'do you desire you had never seen it? Is't lost, Is't gone? Speak, is it out of the way?'

DES : It is not lost; but what, and if it were?.....I say, it is not lost.

OTH : (Getting rather angry) Fetch 't, let me see it; for, my mind misgives.

Desdemona thinks that all this is an evasion on the part of Othello to put her off; and so she speaks out, 'this is a trick to put me from my suit'. Again and again, she brings in the name of Cassio and insists upon his restoration with a rather foolish persistence. Every time she speaks of Cassio, Othello but answers it by harping upon 'the handkerchief' and insisting upon its production. She is unable to fetch it at once but persists in talking of Cassio's affair. Her conduct reminds Othello of Iago's words,—

Note if your lady strain *his* entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity;
Much will be seen in that.

Othello now thinks that he sees much in the present attitude of his wife, and being angry with her, departs abruptly, saying—
‘Away!’ This, in a way, fulfils the correctness of Iago’s prophecy (in Sc. 3 of Act II)—

And by how much she strives to do him (Cassio) good,
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.

PART II.

**Desdemona and Emilia are puzzled at Othello’s Strange Behaviour, but
Desdemona takes a more Charitable View.**

Desdemona is rather perplexed at this strange behaviour of her husband. ‘I ne’er saw this before in him,’ she says, and attributes it to ‘some wonder in this handkerchief,’ and therefore feels most unhappy in the loss of it. But Emilia, who knows the darker and truer side of the world better, traces Othello’s conduct to Jealousy. ‘Is not this man jealous?’, she asks. ‘Men are always so,’ she says, and falls to philosophizing in this strain,—

’Tis not a year or two shows us a man;
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and when they are full
They belch us.

But Desdemona takes a more charitable view of Othello’s harsh conduct. After his departure, she tries to console herself by thinking that, if her husband’s clear spirit ‘hath puddled,’ it must be due to some state-trouble,—

Something sure of State,
Either from Venice, or some unhatch’d practice
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,
Hath puddled his clear spirit.

Like a true saint, innocent of the dark and devious ways of this sinful, crooked world, she excuses his conduct on this charitable ground,—

And in such cases,
Men’s natures wrangle with inferior things,
Though great ones are their object.

Then, to enforce her view, she cites this happy metaphor,—

For, let our finger ache,
And it indues our other healthful members
Even to that sense of pain.

And again,—

Nay, we must think men are not gods,
(But imperfect human beings) and women should not always
Look for such observancy (in them)
As fits the bridal.

Filled with such charitable, tho’ wrong sentiments, she even reproaches herself with unkindness in thinking ill of her husband,—

Beshrew me much, Emilia,
 I was,—unhandsome warrior as I am,—
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;
 But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
 And he's indicted falsely.

But Emilia, the shrewd woman of the world, though wishing it 'be state-matters,' yet adheres to her former view that it looks more as due to his Jealousy. To which Desdemona replies—

Alas the day, I never gave him cause!

Emilia, however, defends her view thus—

But jealous souls will not be answer'd so;
 They are not ever jealous for the cause,
 But jealous for they are jealous; 'tis a monster
 Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Struck with this aspect of Jealousy, Desdemona prays—

Heaven keep that monster from Othello's mind!

PART III.

Desdemona is now interviewed by Cassio and Iago.

Cassio and Iago now come upon the scene. Iago, the universal friend and adviser that he seems to be, suggests to Cassio,—

There is no other way; 'tis she must do 't;
 And, lo, the happiness! go and importune her.

Accordingly, Cassio approaches Desdemona and reminds her—

Madam, my former suit; I do beseech you
 That by your virtuous means I may again
 Exist, and be a member of his love
 Whom I, with all the office of my heart,
 Entirely honour: I would not be delay'd.

If, however, he continues,—

Nothing can ransom me into his love again,
 Then, *to know* so must be my benefit;
 So shall I clothe me in a forced content.

At this moving appeal of Cassio, Desdemona is almost touched to tears; and hence her pitiful and dispirited reply, advising patience—

Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!
 My advocacy is not now in tune;

* * * *

But I have spoken for you all my best
 And stood within the blank of his displeasure.....

She further tells him.—My lord is not my lord at present, being so angry and offended with me. And I do not know if he is only 'in humour altered or in his favour also towards me. But I will do what I can for you. Let that suffice you'.

Iago, the prime plotter and the main mischief-maker, who was really responsible for Othello's changed conduct, hears all this and appears rather to be surprised at it. 'Can he be angry?' he questions repeatedly; and both by way of explanation and consolation to Desdemona, readily invents a believable plea that it must be due to 'something of moment.....There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry'; and so, as a sincere friend, he offers to 'go meet him' and find out the cause 'I prithee, do so' says Desdemona, in her full trust and confidence in the villain's honesty.

PART IV.

Cassio meets Bianca and gives her the Handkerchief to be copied.

Desdemona departs followed by Emilia. Cassio keeps waiting, when, lo! there comes the talkative Bianca, his mistress, blaming him aloud for absenting himself for a week. Cassio tries to satisfy her by saying that it was due to his 'leadens thoughts' and gives Desdemona's handkerchief to her for copying out the work. But she scolds him, suspecting that 'this is some token from a newer friend' and discovers in it the cause of his prolonged absence from her. To these charges and suspicions, Cassio replies,—

Go to, woman!

Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, by my faith, Bianca.....I'd have it copied:

'Take it and do't', he continues, and, after a few more words, gets rid of her, as he does not like to be seen 'woman'd,' particularly because he does 'attend here on the General.'

(Here ends the 4th scene of Act III. With next para, begins the 4th Act).

ACT IV.

PART I.

Iago incriminates Desdemona in filthy and provoking terms, and brings on a Fainting Fit in Othello.

Iago, true to his word to Desdemona that he will 'go seek him,' meets Othello, not for finding out the cause of his anger which he himself has excited, but for increasing and inflaming it further. No more does he now show to his master even that pretended outward respect which he formerly used to do. In a most filthy and foul language, and that, too, bluntly and shamelessly, does he now speak. 'What,' he asks, referring to Desdemona and Cassio,—

To kiss in private?

He deliberately lies in this allegation, but his object is to rouse Othello's fury. The latter, however, is calm, and coolly answers his questions,—

(If they kiss in private, well, then,) the kiss is unauthorized.

But Iago is not satisfied with the tame reply of Othello, and so he tries to enrage him with another shameful, atrocious and offensive question,—

Or, to be naked with her friend in bed
An hour or more,—not meaning any harm ?

On this, Othello, still cool and calm, observes—

To be naked in bed, and not mean any harm ?
It is hypocrisy against the devil :
They that mean virtuously and yet do so,
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt Heaven.

Thereupon, Iago comes out with this rejoinder—

So, (in your opinion) they do nothing ; their lying together, naked in bed, is only a venial (or pardonable,) slip (and nothing more).

Iago finds that he has not succeeded in rousing Othello's anger. Hence, he changes the topic to the 'handkerchief.' 'Suppose,' he skilfully asks, 'I have a handkerchief and give it to my wife,—

Why, then, 'tis hers, my lord ; and being hers
She may, I think, bestow't on any man (she likes).

'Yes,' says Othello, 'she may give it, but not her honor of which she is (the) protectress'—her honor with which the handkerchief or any other love-token is identified or mixed up. Leave aside the question of *honor*, says this pseudo-philosopher, for,—

Her honor is an essence that's not seen :
They have it very oft that have it not :
But, for the handkerchief,—

Repeating the word 'handkerchief' rather ominously, he abruptly stops, to see what effect it will produce on his 'friend.' This intentional and significant repetition of the word 'handkerchief' by the clever rogue, has its desired effect immediately. It brings to Othello's recollection a train of painful reflections and bitter thoughts. It reminds him of Desdemona's gift of his handkerchief to Cassio and her supposed guilty conduct with him, and so he exclaims,—

By Heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it :
Thou said'st—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all—he had *my handkerchief*.

'Ay, what of that ?' says Iago ; 'there is no harm in it.' 'No, no,' replies Othello, 'that is not so good ;' i. e. it bespeaks evil behaviour.

Iago now sees his opportunity and follows it up by adding other falsehoods, clothed in foul and inflaming language—

‘What, if I had said I had seen him do you wrong?
Or heard him say that he did—I know not what he did,—
Lie,—lie with her,—on her,—or what you will.

These words revive Othello’s passion. It bursts forth into a blazing fire which begins to envelop, burn and consume him. Like a patient in high fever, he becomes delirious and raving. He feels unable to bear the terrible strain any longer. His feeling of Jealousy is now fully roused: his Love has turned to Hate, and his righteous Anger into Frantic Fury. His mind and nerves, already distressed, and tensed now get disordered, and his hardy, soldierly frame shakes and reels under its weight. He becomes a raving maniac and utters a series of disjointed thoughts and incoherent words. He loses all control over himself and, after a few moments, swoons and falls helpless and unconscious on the floor.

PART II.

How the devil Iago gloats over his fallen victim!

The swooning and falling of Othello only excite the devilish glee and satisfaction of Iago who thus gloats over his success,—

Work on, my medicine, work!
Thus credulous fools are caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames even thus,—
All guiltless,—meet reproach.

Here is presented to our eyes the quint-essence of villainy,—the pure and concentrated substance of untamed savagery, unfeeling brutality, which finds expression in the joy and satisfaction not only over the spectacle of a fallen victim, but also over the prospect of ruining a worthy and chaste dame,—Desdemona.

Double-dealer that he is, Iago immediately changes his attitude and, as if deeply interested in Othello’s well-being, calls aloud,—

What, ho! my lord! I say! My lord, I say! Othello!

He does this with the apparent object of reviving him but in reality to call some one else to witness Othello’s condition, so that, if anything untoward happens to him, he (Iago) might not be suspected and blamed as the cause of it.

PART III.

Cassio appears but is soon craftily sent away by Iago.

The noise brings Cassio on the scene. But, of all the persons, he is the one that is least wanted here. His presence might place Iago in a difficult position. When Othello revives from his fit of epilepsy, he might question Cassio about the handkerchief, and the truth may be out to Iago’s ruin. He (Iago) must now so plan

as to escape from the trouble; and, if possible, turn the situation to his favour. He therefore readily invents a lie about Othello's epileptic fit, saying—

This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Then Cassio, anxious to hasten Othello's recovery, advises—

Rub him about the temples.

But Iago, not desiring his immediate restoration and posing as a physician, tells Cassio not to disturb him but let him alone,—

No, forbear ;

The lethargy must have his quiet course ;

If not, he foams at mouth, and by and by,

Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs !

Therefore, he suggests to Cassio,—

Do you withdraw yourself a little while,

He will recover straight, (and go away.)

And when he is gone, “ come to me so that I might speak with you on some important subject.” This advice to Cassio is given, as Iago wants to make use of him in his future plan of action. Cassio accordingly goes away at once, promising to meet him soon as advised.

PART IV.

After recovering from his Fit, Othello yields to become an Eavesdropper.

Othello now recovers and his *pseudo-friend* very anxiously enquires of him, ‘ have you not hurt your head ? ’ (by falling on the floor.) ‘ What,.....Dost thou mock me ? ’ asks Othello angrily, and Iago replies ‘ No, I only wish that you would bear your fortune like a man.’ Othello being in the grip of Passion, his only thought is about Cassio and Desdemona. ‘ Did he confess it ? ’ is his first question ; and his *honest* friend, as if to console him, tells him not to mind his misfortune,—

Good sir, be a man ;

Think every bearded fellow that's but yoked

May draw with you : there's millions now alive

That nightly lie in those unproper beds

Which they dare swear peculiar : your case is better.

Lest, however, these words should cool Othello's temper, he immediately follows them up with these fiery ones—

O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,

To lip a wanton in a secure couch,

And to suppose her chaste !

Iago means to say that Desdemona is really unchaste and that Othello still lives and lies with her, thinking her to be pure and innocent. To deepen that wicked impression still further, he advises Othello thus,—

Stand you awhile apart ;
Confine yourself but in a patient list.
Whilst you were here o'erwhelmed with your grief—
A passion most unsuited such a man—
Cassio came hither ; I shifted him away,
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy ;
Bade him anon return and here speak with me,
The which he promised.

And, when Cassio will come up at the appointed time, Iago continues—

Then, I will make him tell the tale anew,
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when,
He hath and is again to cope your wife :

And while Cassio is narrating the story, ' You will be able to mark his tell-tale gestures,—

The fleers, the gibes and notable scorns,
That dwell in every region of his face '.

These will confirm the truth of what Iago has been telling him, and will even furnish the almost direct proof desired by Othello. Therefore, says Iago, do as I tell you, i.e., ' Do but encave yourself.....to mark his tell-tale gestures.' Othello's nature rebels against such a mean practice. He will not willingly stoop to hide himself and be the mean and contemptible spy or an eaves-dropper ; he will rather go direct to the ' most bloody ' thing on hand. ' That's not amiss,' says Iago, ' but yet,' he suggests that it is better to ' keep time in all ! ' But as, under the influence of his evil passion, Othello had been longing to know the truth about his wife's (guilty) relations with Cassio, and as here was offered an opportunity to him to hear Cassio's confession himself and to know the truth directly from Cassio's own mouth, he accepts Iago's advice, retires and encaves himself.

Presently, Cassio comes up as already bidden by Iago. The latter starts speaking about Bianca, ' a creature that dotes on Cassio.' Iago knows fully well that when Cassio ' hears of her, he cannot refrain from the excess of laughter.' The clever rogue also knows that when Cassio comes out with his gibes and fleers, laughter and other gestures, the Moor is sure to mistake them as referring to Desdemona's adulterous flirtations and to become thoroughly convinced of her guilt. As Iago says to himself—

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;
And his unbookish jealousy must construe
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,
Quite in the wrong.

Now that Cassio appears, Iago says to him in a low voice,—

Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power.
How quickly should you speed !

For, he says, he 'never knew woman love man so'; nay, she even 'gives it out that you shall marry her.' Cassio's vanity is easily tickled and, being naturally gay and light-tempered, he laughs, jumps, moves this way and that, and behaves in quite an excited and hilarious manner. And Othello, who is at some distance, merely sees the gestures but does not hear the words accompanying them and so construes them 'quite in the wrong.' When Cassio moves his hands or lips, he takes it to mean, 'now, he begins the story.' And when Cassio imitates Bianca's flirtations,—saying 'she—

So hangs and lolls and weeps upon me;
So hales and pulls me: ha, ha, ha!—'

Othello interprets,—how she (Desdemona) 'plucked him to my chamber.' Whenever he points out how 'she (Bianca) falls me thus about my neck,' Othello means it as Desdemona's crying 'O dear Cassio!' When he smiles, the Moor grows angry; and, when he bursts out with laughter, Othello ejaculates,—

So, so, so, so! they laugh that win;

(Or) Have you scored me? * * *

(Or)—Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

These surmises and ejaculations on the part of Othello appear to the cool spectator as ludicrous. But we must remember that Othello is no longer sane but is extremely perplexed, tossed and swayed by suspicions* produced by an overpowering 'shadowing' passion. Thrown into such a state of mind, little wonder that he is carried away by his first impressions however trivial, jumps to wrong conclusions, decides hastily, and never pauses, even for a moment, to reflect on their relevancy, sanity or cogency.

*As Ingersoll says about Suspicion whether produced and promoted by Jealousy, Greed, Selfishness, or Bias of any kind:—

*Suspicion is the soil in which prejudice grows, and prejudice is the Upas tree in whose shade Reason falls and Justice dies. * * * One of the greatest men of this country said, 'prejudice is the spider of the mind'. It weaves its web over every window and over every crevice where light can enter, and then disputes the existence of the light that it has excluded. That is prejudice. Prejudice will give the lie to all the other senses. It will swear the northern star out of the sky of truth. You must avoid it. It is the womb of injustice, and a man who cannot rise above prejudice is not a civilized man; he is simply a barbarian.

When a man has a little suspicion in his mind, he tortures everything; he tortures the most innocent actions into the evidence of crime. Suspicion is a kind of intellectual dye that colors every thought that comes in contact with it.

I remember I once had a conversation with Surgeon-General Hammond, in which he went on to state that he thought many people were confined in asylums, charged with insanity, who were perfectly sane.

PART V.

Othello, further convinced on seeing Bianca produce his handkerchief, decides with Iago as to how he should kill Desdemona and Cassio.

Just at that moment, Bianca, who has all along been 'haunting' Cassio, comes up to the place and, somewhat in a brusque tone, enquires,

What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now! I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work? A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work?

She scolds Cassio and ends her talk by throwing the handkerchief on his face, saying—'There; give it your hobby-horse; Wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.'

On this, Othello at once suspects and exclaims—

By Heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

After Bianca and Cassio depart, he comes out of his hiding place and meets Iago. He is now fully convinced that Cassio and Desdemona are guilty. Filled with vengetul thoughts, Othello cries out,

How shall I murder him, Iago?.....
I would have him nine years a-killing.

Referring to his wife, he jeeringly remarks that she is—

A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

And yet the memory of her sweetness, her beauty, her charm and

I asked him how he accounted for it. Said he, "Physicians are sent for to examine the man, and they are told before they get to him that he is crazy. Therefore, the moment they look upon him, they are hunting for insane acts and not sane acts; they are looking not to see how naturally he acts, but how unnaturally he acts."

They are poisoned with the suspicion that he is insane, and if he coughs twice, or if he gets up and walks about uneasily—his mind is a little unsettled: something wrong! If he suddenly gets angry—*sure thing!* When a man believes himself to be or knows himself to be sane, and is charged with insanity, the very warmth, the very heat of his denial will convince thousands of people that he is insane. He suddenly finds himself insecure, and the very insecurity that he feels makes him act strangely. He finds in a moment that explanation only complicates. He finds that his denial is worthless; that his friends are suspicious, and that, under pretence of his own good, he is to be seized and incarcerated. Many a man, as sane as you or I, has under such circumstances gone to madness. It is a hard thing to explain. The more you talk about it, the more outsiders, having a suspicion, are convinced that you are insane.

other graces comes back as a momentary flash to him and, he exclaims—

O, the world hath not a sweeter creature !

She might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

The depraved Iago does not relish this thought on the part of Othello and so he interrupts the speech with the remark,—

Nay, that's not your way.

Whereupon Othello says,—

Hang her ! I do but say what she is , so delicate with her needle : an admirable musician : O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear ; of so high and plenteous wit and invention.....But yet the pity of it, Iago ! O Iago, the pity of it !

The sadness, pain and agony of Othello's pathetic outburst, are tragic, heart-rending, unendurable. Othello,—writhing and groaning in the clutches of Jealousy,—affords a good subject for psychological study. Having once loved his wife deeply and passionately—having intensely admired her charms and graces,—having been swayed by the thrills and ecstasies of pure Love,—he has now grown jealous, become convinced of her guilt, and made the grim determination to do away with her. And, tho' so determined, yet his thoughts at times naturally revert to the happy memories of the past. And hence this moving reference to Desdemona's charms and attainments.

Seeing Othello relapse into pity and praises for Desdemona, and taking them for the symptoms of his reviving fondness for her, Iago skilfully touches the Moor in his vital part, honor,—

If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

Reminded of her iniquity, Othello at once bursts out with this angry retort—

I will chop her into messes ; cuckold me !

He is now decided and, setting his teeth in grim determination, exclaims—

Let her rot, and perish, and be damned to-night.

I'll not expostulate with her

Get me some poison, Iago, this night.

Iago is pleased that Othello is still firm. But his cruel, malicious and malignant mind would not be satisfied, if Desdemona were killed by poison. It is only an indirect means of death and too mild a method. Malignity and Revenge (to be fully satisfied) must seek for a more direct method of killing,—killing that must be by one's own hand, and death that must come before one's own eyes. There must be a thrill of devilish pleasure at the sight of it and a savage joy in its execution. Besides, there is the element of torture and remorse for Othello if Desdemona is done to death by his hands, and not if she dies by poison. This additional torture for Othello would satisfy Iago's

revengeful spirit. Therefore, suggests this villain in the garb of an honest friend,—

Do it not with poison, but strangle her in her bed—
The very bed she hath contaminated.

‘Good, good, very good,’ rejoins the gullible Othello, falling in with the suggestion. He thinks there is ‘Justice’ in it, and so it ‘pleases’ him. ‘As for Cassio,’ Iago says with a resolute air, ‘let me be his undertaker; you shall hear more by midnight.’ ‘Excellent good!’ chimes in the once noble Moor to this murderous scheme.

PART VI.

Othello strikes Desdemona before Lodovico and others to the amazement of All.

In the meantime, trumpets announce the arrival of Lodovico from Venice. Othello goes out to meet him. Desdemona, Iago and others also join and welcome him. Lodovico hands a letter to Othello from the Senate, and the latter, receiving it with all due respect, reads it. Just then, Lodovico enquires about Cassio who is absent; and Desdemona, replying to him, says,—

Cousin, there’s fall’n between him and my lord
An unkind breach; but you shall make all well.

‘Are you sure of that?’ questions Othello rather startingly, smelling something questionable in Desdemona’s reply, and reads the letter again. Desdemona is taken aback and calls out,—‘My lord!’ There is calmness again, and again does Desdemona reply to Lodovico to his enquiry about the breach thus,—

A most unhappy breach, I would do much
To atone him, for the love I bear to Cassio!

This is too much for Othello who is teeming with Jealousy against Cassio. The mention of the words “love for Cassio,” quite upsets him, and he bursts forth with this furious comment against her,—‘*Fire and brimstone!*’ Whereupon she, in fear and innocence, merely addresses him, ‘My lord,’ and asks Lodovico if he is angry. And Lodovico replies—

‘May-be, the letter moved him
For, as I think, they do command him home;
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Upon this, Desdemona feels relieved; her husband’s anger is not against her as she thought, but it is due to the letter. And so she ejaculates in a child-like fashion,—

By my troth, I am glad on ’t.

Othello, however, thinks that her ‘gladness’ is over Cassio’s appointment, her supposed illicit lover, and, **losing all self-control, strikes her in the presence of all.** Disgraced as she is, she is yet loving and modest; she only says ‘I have not deserved this; for, I

have done no wrong to offend you'. Lodovico is rather surprised and, addressing the Moor, says in a pacifying spirit,—

My lord, this would not be believed in Venice,
Tho' I should swear I saw't: 'tis very much;
Make her amends; she weeps.

But Othello is now in the grip of the green-eyed monster—Jealousy—and cannot be so easily conciliated; and so he replies in high-wrought anger—

O devil, devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.

'Out of my sight' he commands Desdemona. And she obeys, saying 'I will not stay to offend you.' 'An obedient lady,' remarks Lodovico.

The words of Desdemona about Cassio were uttered in all innocence. But the Jealous Moor construes them as an impudent flaunting of her guilt. He is totally upset. Miserably torn between extreme rage against his wife and thoughts of obedience to the Senate, he turns to Lodovico and breaks out into words now referring to State-matters, now pertaining to his wife's misconduct; into words of welcome for Lodovico, and then into words about Cassio's wicked behaviour with his wife. In this way he jumbles up, in his confounded state of mind, several things in his speech, and only finally makes Lodovico understand that he shall obey the Senatorial order. Then, inviting him to supper that night, he leaves the scene and goes into his castle.

PART VII.

Lodovico and the Villain Iago comment on the strange behaviour of Othello.

Lodovico rather wonderingly asks Iago who lags behind,—

Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all-in all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? Whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce?

When told that 'he is much changed,' Lodovico further questions—

Are his wits safe? Is he not light of brain?

But Iago pretends to be loyal to his master, and therefore answers,—

He's that he is; I may not breathe my censure
What he might be: if what he might, he is not,
I would to Heaven he were!

LOD: What, strike his wife!

IAGO: Faith, that was not so well; yet would I know
That stroke would prove the worst!

And, again, in his artful, cunning and significant vein—

Alas, alas! it is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him,
And his own courses will denote him, so
That I may save my speech; do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

LOD: I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

PART VIII.

Othello questions first Emilia and then Desdemona.

Othello, entering his room in the castle, meets Emilia and questions her rather searchingly, concerning Desdemona's supposed unchastity with Cassio. He opens the conversation,—

You have seen nothing, then (in their meeting)?.....
Yes (you admit), you have seen Cassio and her together.
Did they never whisper?.....
Nor send you out of the way (on some pretext)?

To all such questions, Emilia has but negative answers to give, saying, 'I never saw anything wrong--

Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect (anything about it).
But then I saw no harm (in their meeting), and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them'.

'That's strange,' utters Othello, half in anger and half in surprise. That's strange!, he thinks within himself, that Desdemona should misconduct herself and this woman, being her maid and confidant, should know nothing of it. Emilia, who sees through his mind, tries to convince him that his wife is honest by saying,—

I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake;
For, if she be not honest, chaste and true,
There's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

She means to say that if Desdemona is not chaste, then there is no woman in the whole world that is chaste or honorable. She therefore advises him—

If you think other-wise, remove your thought,
If any wretch have put this in your head,
(As I am afraid that some one has done),
Let Heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!

Othello is not convinced of the truth of what Emilia has said in her own matter-of-fact fashion. He thinks he has failed to get the true information from her. He even misconstrues her character, thinking that,—

She is a simple bawd that cannot say as much;
This is a subtle whore,
A close lock-and-key of villainous secrets

Anyhow, he will question Desdemona herself and, if possible, elicit the truth from her. He therefore directs Emilia to 'bid her come hither'.

Obedient to her husband's command, Desdemona comes in and, fondly but in fear, enquires of him his purpose,—

My lord, what is your will ?.....

What is your pleasure ?

Othello orders Emilia to go out and 'shut the door', leaving them alone. When they are together, Othello makes several attempts to detect some guilty proof, some suspicious circumstance from her directly. So, he at first asks her to,

Let me see your eyes,

Look in my face.

He stares at her face ; and, thinks if she be guilty, she will evade his look. But, Desdemona, who is spotlessly pure and is ignorant of his purpose, takes it to be a 'horrible fancy.' She, in her fear, even kneels and begs of him,—

Upon my knees, what doth your speech import ?

I understand a fury in your words,

But not the words.

Much against Othello's expectation, she does not bend before his looks. She has the daring, as he construes, to question him for the meaning of his words. Hence, Othello takes her to be a model pretender and trained adulteress instead of the acme of purity and innocence that she really is. Hence the following dialogue,—

OTH : Why, what art thou ? (not to understand my words)

DES : Your wife, my lord, your true and loyal wife

OTH : Come, Swear it.....Swear thou art honest.

DES : Heaven doth truly know it !

OTH : Heaven truly knows that thou art false as Hell.

DES : (in agitation and righteous anger) To whom ? my lord, with whom ? How am I false ?

Thus Othello's second attempt also fails. His expected information does not come forth. Ready answers, assertions and contradictions and counter-questions alone he is able to elicit,—these he does not need. He feels helpless. Expostulation with her will not do ; the time for killing her has not yet come. Her supposed devilish character infuriates him ; her angelic beauty softens him. In the clash of conflicting emotion which, on the one hand, goad him on to a ruthless decision and a determined action, and which, on the other, land him in hesitations and check his progress, he becomes indecisive and impotent. Situated thus, like a beaten child or a chidden woman, he merely bursts out into weeping and crying,—

O Desdemona ! Away, away, away !

PART IX.

Desdemona's answer but aggravates the Mischief on a Suspicious Mind.

What a spectacle is here presented to our eyes of an affectionate couple, led astray in their judgments of each other through ignorance of the true causation of events. On the one hand, we have a great General of an imposing frame, of indomitable courage, of quick and inflexible resolve, reduced to the plight of a physical and moral cripple,—entirely deluded by mere suspicions. On the other hand, we have the gentle and angelic Desdemona, ever affectionate to her husband, and loving him even now, despite his cruel behaviour towards her, but sadly ignorant of the cause which has moved her husband. And, hence her question—

Alas the heavy day ! Why do you weep ?

In her innocence or ignorance, she attributes all this to his recall from Cyprus, thro' the influence of her father, to Venice,—

Am I the motive of these tears, my lord ?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me ; if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

And this girl,—who long ago had lost her mother, and was lately disowned by her father when she married ; who gave up her country and clime—all for the sake of the love she bore to the noble and valiant Moor whom she wedded and followed to distant Cyprus,—is now suspected, reproached, ill-treated and submerged in sorrow.

Turning again to Othello, we see him sinking deeper and deeper in despair, depression and misery. The thought of the heinous crime, believed to have been committed by his beloved wife, cuts him to the quick,—to the very marrow of his being. Feeling deeply wounded and tortured, hopeless and forlorn, he breaks out into these heart-breaking sighs and sorrowful reflections,—

Had it pleased heaven
To try me with affliction ; had they rain'd
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head ;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips ;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes ;
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience ; but, alas, to make me
A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow and moving finger at !
Yet could I bear that too ! well, very well !

But Othello says, ' I cannot allow myself to be discarded from the one place,—*the Sanctum Sanctorum*, of my life, '—

But there,—where I have garner'd up my heart,
 Where either I must live or bear no life,—
 The fountain from the which my current runs,
 Or else dries up ; to be discarded thence !
 Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
 To knot and gender in !

'This I cannot possibly bear. It is here that I lose all my patience.' And, therefore, he breaks out into fury again, and loudly apostrophizes "Patience" thus,—

Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubin,
 Turn thy complexion there ; and, ay, look grim as Hell.

Here we have a glimpse of the psychological workings of a mind sorely afflicted with the suspicions of the treachery and disloyalty of the most dearly and deeply beloved object of his life. Besides showing us how 'Suspicion is the spider of the mind,' this outburst of Othello is a striking illustration of the truth,—'Love brooks no partnership'. But poor Desdemona, not fully realizing the nature of Othello's affliction, only urges—

I hope my noble lord esteems me honest

At which, Othello flings in her face this vulgar denial, couched in metaphor—

O, ay, as summer flies are in the shambles,
 That quicken even with blowing.

This stinging remark is too much for her, and so she piteously asks—

Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed ?

Othello, now in a state of the wildest frenzy, goes on repeating the words 'Committed !' 'what committed ?' And, in the midst of his repetitions, he loses his sense of decency, breaks forth into a series of vulgar and abusive expressions, and calls his beautiful and loving wife, 'thou public commoner,' 'whore,' 'impudent strumpet,' a 'weed.....so lovely fair and so sweet, which but aches the senses.'

Then he questions her scornfully—

Are not you a strumpet ? not a whore ?—

Poor Desdemona, totally dazed, has no other answer to give than to deny, emphatically and in the name of Heaven and her holy religion, the odious charge, protesting—

By heaven, you do me wrong * * *
 If to preserve this vessel for my lord
 From any other foul unlawful touch
 Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Othello is again balked. In his third attempt also, he fails to get the truth (as he thinks) from her. So, he merely exclaims in a disgusted, doubting mood, 'is it possible ?' And, casting at her

his last vile remark,—that he took her for ‘that cunning whore of Venice that married with Othello’,—he abruptly goes out of the room.

PART X.

Desdemona Appeals to Iago. Emilia Curses the Villain who has misled Othello.

Desdemona is now much dejected, dazed, almost prostrated. And, so, when Emilia enters the room after Othello’s departure and enquires after her health, Desdemona merely answers,—

Faith, half asleep; * * *
 do not talk to me Emilia;
 I cannot weep, nor answer have I none
 But what should go by water. Prithoe, to-night
 Lay on my bed my wedding sheets: remember;
 And call thy husband hither.

Emilia goes and fetches Iago. He notices a pitiable dejection and despondency in Desdemona. As if entirely ignorant of the affairs, he asks her ‘How is’t with you?’ She does not know how or what to say. She merely utters, ‘I cannot tell; my husband chid me as if I were a child!’ ‘Why, why, what is the matter, lady?’ enquires Iago, with all pretended eagerness. Seeing her silent and oppressed with grief, Emilia comes to her rescue and replies,—

Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewholed her,
 Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
 As true hearts cannot bear.

‘Am I that name, Iago?’ interposes Desdemona pent up with grief. As if he has not understood Emilia, but really to make Desdemona herself utter the foul and slanderous word, in order to tickle his vile and wicked heart, he questions her ‘What name, my lady?’ Desdemona would not utter that foul word. Her pure soul recoils at the very mention of it. So she simply answers,—

Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

This villain of the darkest dye who has been at the bottom of all mischief and knows full well every secret in detail, pretends complete ignorance and surprisingly asks,—

Why did he so?

‘I do not know,’ replies poor Desdemona. ‘I am sure I am none,’ so saying, she bursts out weeping. The devil who, only a little while ago, chuckled with glee over his success in damning her character to her husband, now pretends to console her by repeating, ‘Do not weep, do not weep.’ Emilia then breaks out into a volley of angry protests and comments, on behalf of her mistress,—

Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd *Whore*? Would it not make one weep?

She cries out again,—

Why should he call her *whore*? who keeps her company?
What place? what time? what form? what likelihood?

She then ventures her shrewd opinion,—

'The Moor's abused by some most villainous knave.....

It is the work of some eternal villain who, 'to get some office,
has devised this slander.' And when Desdemona, in the boundless
charity of her heart, says,—

If such there be, Heaven pardon him!

at once comes the cutting and curseful retort of Emilia,—

A halter pardon him! and Hell gnaw his bones!

She then goes on bawling out in her righteous indignation,—

O Heaven, that such companions thou 'ldst unfold
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world
Even from the East to the West!

Iago is the villainous knave to whom this applies. He therefore does not like the topic to be discussed any further. Hence he checks his wife,—

Fie! There is no such man, it is impossible.

And when still she persists, and loudly declaims against such villains, he commands,—'Speak within door.' But Emilia would not stop and cries, 'O, fie upon them!' She even turns against her husband, and blames him for having listened to some scandal-mongering villain,—

That turn'd your wit the scamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

And the only reply Iago gives, is—

You are a fool; go to.

Here, Desdemona intervenes and, in sorrow and helplessness, turns to Iago for help,—

O, good Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
I know not how I lost him.

And kneeling down, and swearing 'by this light of Heaven,' she assures him—

If e'er my will did trespass against his love,
Either in discourse of thought or actual deed;
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or my sense,
Delighted them in any other form;

Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will,—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly ;
Comfort forswear me !

She implores him most piteously, ' Good friend, go to him ' and satisfy him. Sincere and helping friend that this rascal has all along appeared to be, he now invents a ready excuse to lull her into a treacherous calm, saying--

I pray you, be content, ' tis but his humour :
The business of the State does him offence,
And he does chide with you.

Like a child, Desdemona feels partly relieved ; and ' if't were no other,'—she begins. But before she could conclude her sentence, Iago, fearing that she may not credit the excuse given by him, quickly interrupts and assures her,—

' Tis but so, I warrant.....
Go in, and weep not, all things shall be well.

PART XI.

Roderigo again complains but is, as before, soon pacified and further instigated by Iago.

Just then, the trumpets blow and announce the hour of the State supper. Desdemona, as the General's wife, departs to join the assembly.

Roderigo now meets Iago. He has been led to believe that Iago would win Desdemona for him. With this bait dangling before him, he has been, from time to time, paying heavy sums of money to Iago. Lately, the fool was induced to give up even his jewels for being presented to that lady. He now comes to suspect that all this is but a scurvy trick and finds himself to be ' fopped in it.' Therefore, there ensues this interesting conversation between the angry dupe and his calm but clever duper :—

ROD : Every day thou daffest me with some device, Iago ; and rather, as it seems to me now, keepest from me all convenience than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will indeed no longer endure it ; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

IAGO : Will you hear me, Roderigo ?

ROD : Faith, I have heard too much ; for, your words and performances are no kin together.

IAGO : You charge me most unjustly.

ROD : With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me to deliver to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist ; you have told me she hath received them and returned me expectations

and comforts of sudden respect and acquaintance ; but I find none.

* * *

IAGO: Very well.

ROD: I tell you 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona ; if she will return me my jewels, I will give over my suit and repent my unlawful solicitation ; if not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.

Threatened thus by Roderigo, Iago is placed rather in an awkward and risky position. If Roderigo complains to Desdemona, he (Iago) will stand exposed in all the frauds that he has practised upon his dupes. He will call me 'to a restitution large of gold and jewels that I bobb'd from him as gifts to Desdemona,' and 'it must not be.' So, he tries to bring him round, (1) First, by trying to explain himself, saying 'Will you hear me ?' But Roderigo chokes him off by replying, 'I have already heard too much'; (2) Second, by protesting his honesty,—'You charge me most unjustly,' and (3) Third, by showing to be indifferent about it,—'Well ; go to ; very well ;' to which Roderigo replies 'I tell you 'tis not very well..... Assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.'

Iago finds that all his replies and reasons prove unavailing ; he sees that the man is angry and determined. Hence, he veers round at once and is ready with a new plan. 'Why, now I see there's mettle in thee,' he flatters him by tickling his vanity. 'Give me thy hand, Roderigo !', he exclaims as if in admiration for his spirit. 'Your suspicion is not without wit and judgment,' he praises him, because, though, 'I have dealt most directly in thy affair,.....I grant...it hath not so appeared.' From now, he says, he will be more open, and,—

If thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean purpose, courage and valour,—this night show it ; if thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery and devise engines for my life.

Roderigo is caught in the net cast by Iago ; the temptation is too much for him. 'Well, what is it ?' he eagerly asks. Iago tells him how an 'especial commission has come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello's place,' and how Othello with Desdemona 'goes into Mauritania' But there is a way to prevent it and his abode or stay can,—

Be lingered here by some accident ; wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio !

'How do you mean, removing of him (Cassio) ?' asks Roderigo rather perplexed. Why, 'knocking out his brains,' bluntly answers the heartless Iago. Roderigo is horrified ; 'and *that* you would have me to do' he asks nervously. 'Ay,' replies Iago, the master schemer,—

If you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night with a harlotry, and thither will I go to him. I will fashion his return from thence, to fall out between twelve and one. If you will watch his going thence, you may take him at your pleasure.

Seeing Roderigo stupefied, Iago assures and fortifies him,—

Come, stand not amazed at it; I will be near to second your attempt and he shall fall between us. I will show you such a necessity in his death that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him.

PART XII.

After supper Desdemona goes to her bed-chamber and has a foreboding of her death; her last talk with Emilia about Women going wrong.

They then part company. The supper in the castle is over. Othello goes out to see his guest off; but, before doing so, he directs Desdemona,—

Get you to bed on the instant; I will be returned forthwith; dismiss your attendant there.

'I will, my lord', she replies; and, followed by Emilia, retires to her bed-chamber.

Emilia asks,—

How goes it now? He looks gentler than he did.

Desdemona replies—

He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

'What, dismiss me!' ejaculates Emilia. But Desdemona softly assures—

It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia.....
We must not now displease him.

Owing to the constant strain on her mind caused by fear, worry and anxiety, Desdemona now lapses into a mood of utter dejection. She appears to have lost all interest in things worldly. She even seems to be under a vague fear of something which she cannot explain. And to Emilia who tells her, 'I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed' she but indifferently answers 'All is one.' Probably, out of a presentiment, or out of a deliberate wish, brought on by disgust, she also next asks her maid,—

If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

'Come, come, you talk (nonsense,)' admonishes Emilia. 'No,' says Desdemona, 'my mother had a maid call'd Barbara; and, being deserted by her lover who proved mad, the maid in her misfortune, used to sing a—Song of the Willow, and even died singing it'. 'To-night' she continues 'I too will sing it like

poor Barbara.' She sings the song; and, being under an unaccountable fear, she suddenly stops in the midst of her song, and then recommences it. Even the whistling of the wind seems to convey a sort of terror for her.

Emilia tries to brace her up. And they gradually divert to a conversation about women. 'Dost thou in conscience think, Emilia,' questions the innocent Desdemona, 'that there be women who do abuse their husbands in such gross kind? Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?' 'In troth!' replies the maid, full of worldly wisdom,—(wisdom such as is followed by all the world of practical men, priests, politicians, diplomats, statesmen, etc.) 'I think I should; and undo't when I had done. But I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring or some similar petty object. But, if the reward or consequence of such a deed were to be the whole world, why, then,—

Tis a great price
For a small vice.'

'Who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? Nay, I should venture (even) purgatory for't.' And again, she proceeds to justify it thus,—'Why, the wrong is but a wrong in the world; and having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you must quickly make it right.'

Then, for the benefit of the wondering and simple-minded Desdemona, Emilia breaks out into this homily on Husbands, faults,—

Yes, I do think it is their husbands' faults
If wives do fall; say, that they (husbands) slack their duties
And pour our treasures into foreign laps, * * *
Or, say, they strike us, * * *
Why, we have galls; and tho' we have some grace,
Yet have we some revenge.

And, therefore, she proceeds to expound her philosophy,—

Let husbands know, their wives have sense like them;
They see and smell and have their palates both
For sweet and sour, as husbands have.
What is it they do when they change us for others? Is it sport?
I think it is: and doth affection breed it?
I think it doth: is't frailty that thus errs?
It is so too: and have not we affections,
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?

And the sum and substance of her philosophy and advice is,—

Then, let them use us well. Else, let them know,
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.

What can Desdemona do but to bow in mute assent to such practical politics full of sound sense and wisdom,—to such equal justice between the sexes?

True, some of the ills or wicked acts of women are copied from those of their masters or husbands ; but as for Desdemona, in her angelic sweetness and purity, she prays to Heaven to send her such uses or opportunities that she may be enabled. 'not to pick bad from bad ; but, by bad mend '

The conversation now ends. Desdemona bids ' Good-night ' to her maid, the latter departs, and she falls asleep.

THE SIGNIFICANCE

OF

SCENE 4, ACT III. AND ACT IV.

Such are the events that have followed Othello's vow for ' a wide and capable revenge. ' They vividly show the state of things leading to the horrible catastrophe. Under the impelling force of the passion of Jealousy, persons and events are shaping themselves towards the one inevitable sombre result

Othello, for example, is no longer his old self. He now appears before us as a man torn with conflicting emotions. His mind has become a battle-ground between high and base motives, noble passions and wicked ones. On the one hand, his ' free and open nature ' struggles to gain the mastery over him ; and, on the other, the poison of Jealousy injected by Iago tinges in his very blood and burns like ' a mine of sulphur. ' As a result, he is thoroughly ' in favour, as in humour, altered. ' Now, he behaves like a maniac, foaming and falling into a trance ; and now, like a beaten child or a chidden woman, he bursts forth into a torrent of tears. At one time, he is gentle and attends to his state-functions in a manner worthy of his nature, at another time, he is peevish, strikes his wife and commands her to dismiss her attendant soon from her bed-chamber. Once, he is goaded by mere humour or fancy, and asks his wife for her hand, or to show him her eyes ; at another time, under the grip of frenzy, he loses decency and breaks out into a volley of vulgar abuses. He sinks to low levels and consents to mean deeds. He acts the part of an eaves-dropper ; he also holds a secret court with Emilia. Now, he is the honored host of a State-supper ; then, he is the wretched conspirer of murderous schemes. He is thus torn asunder by conflicting passions ; and though finally he assumes a gentleness, it is but a sombre calm before a terrible storm.

Desdemona is the same simple and innocent, loving and lovable person, but suffering for her very innocence and simplicity. Even in his anger, Othello praises her beauty as—' like one in Heaven, ' and speaks highly to Iago of her charms and accomplishments, her delicateness with the needle and her capacity in music. Yet, she is struck by him openly and abused in vulgar and wicked language. She is of so gentle a nature and of so modest a

character, that even when 'bewhored' by her husband in secret, or struck by him in public, she would soon compose herself. She is so sweet, charitable, saintly, super-human, angelic, in her temper that she has no ill-will, no curses against her wrong-doers. She is almost a child in her innocence. She loves him so much that even when ill-treated, she but takes a vow that 'though he do but shake me off to beggarly divorcement,' she shall love him still. She is so pure that not a single vulgar word escapes her lips, nor a single wicked thought passes across her mind. When Iago questions her as to how she was addressed and abused by Othello, she would not utter the word *whore*. 'It doth abhor' her; and she would rather indirectly reply,—'Such as she says my lord did say I was'. She would not commit, like Emilia, any evil deed even for the award of 'all the world'. She would not retaliate against her husband as wordly women do; and rather than copy his evil ways, she would, by bad, mend herself. She would not attribute evil motive to her husband for his harsh conduct but would ascribe it to change of humour due to State-matters. She is so child-like that she easily feels relieved whenever she is told that 'all will be well'. In character, as also in conduct, she is so simple and guileless that, at times, she becomes childish, foolish and tactless,—which in this crooked and self-seeking world, amounts to a great fault in her. Again and again, would she persist before her angry lord for Cassio's restoration, not knowing that his anger is due to the very fact of her doing so. She would always, tho' ignorantly and foolishly, interpret his attitude as an attempt to divert her from her topic. She does not know that by her persistency she incriminates herself more and more, in the eyes of Othello. And she, therefore, finally pays for her folly with her life.

In this Act, she is presented as a patient sufferer, cruelly wronged, and labouring under a vague presentiment of her death. In a mood of despair, she says to Emilia, 'If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me in one of those same sheets.' She even sings the gloomy 'Song of the Willow' which, in her disappointed love, Barbara sang and died singing. These, though ignorantly uttered at the time, point to the truth of the adage,—“Coming events cast their shadows before.”

Such are the hero and the heroine of the play;—the one is presented as a suspecting and sinning aggressor, and the other as a suspected innocent,—cruelly sinned against; the one is violent, striking, abusing and cursing; and the other, non-violent, patient, calm, and not retaliating. The contrast is dark and even ominous, indicative of domestic misery, of calculated persecution, and of an impending catastrophe.

(Outline of the story, Act by Act)
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF
ACT V.

The State-supper in honour of Lodovico (as mentioned in Scene III of the last Act) is over in the Castle. And Othello orders Desdemona to go to bed straight, while he goes out walking with his guest to see him off to his lodging-place and promises to return soon. Desdemona accordingly retires to her bed-chamber, dismisses Emilia, and is fast asleep when Othello returns.

Troubled and agitated, Othello enters the bed-chamber and reflects over the 'Cause' that is prompting him, and the 'Life' he is going to pluck. Being kissed, Desdemona wakes and Othello asks her to repent of her sins as, he says, he is going to kill her. She protests her innocence but in vain, and he soon strangles her to death.

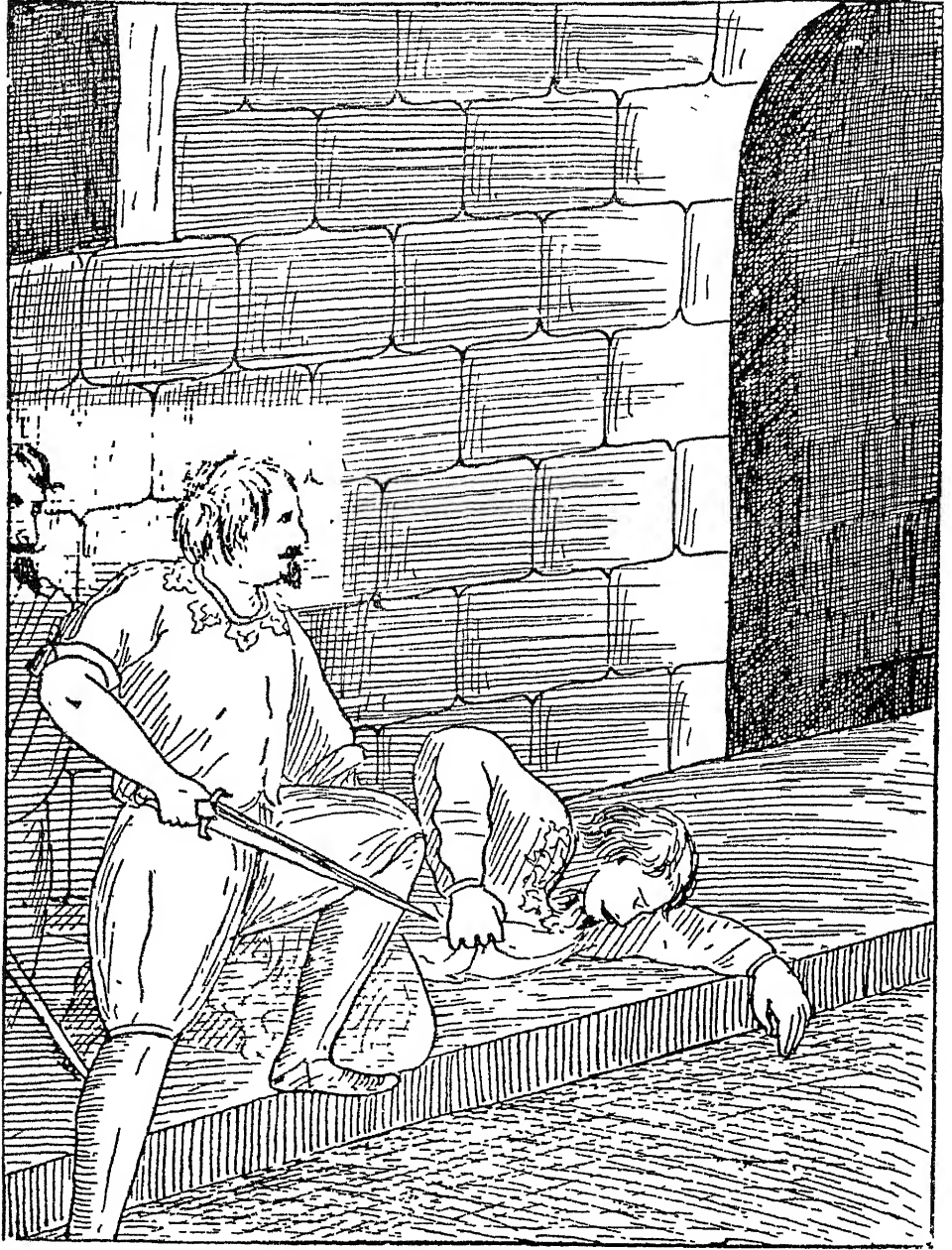
In the meantime, in the dead of night, Cassio returns from Bianca's place. As previously instigated by Iago, Roderigo way-lays and attacks him. Cassio, being well protected by a special armour, is not hurt. But he, in turn, seriously wounds his assailant. Iago, who is standing close by in the darkness of the night, wounds Cassio in the leg and disappears.

The shouts and groans of the wounded bring Gratiano, Lodovico and others on to the scene. Iago also comes up with a lantern in his hand, and dressed in his night shirt, as if he is hastening direct from his bed. On the way he finds Roderigo lying wounded and, pretending to take him for a murderous robber, stabs him to death. He then meets others and in their presence dresses Cassio's wound with his shirt, and causes him to be carried in a chair to the Castle to which place others also repair.

Emilia, sent over to Othello by her husband to report these incidents, arrives at the bed-chamber in the castle. And when she is admitted, she discovers to her horror that her mistress too lies murdered by the Moor. She raises a cry and all within earshot, hasten to the spot. Then, mutual enquiries and explanations follow in which Emilia and Cassio explain how the handkerchief came into Cassio's possession. Iago is thus exposed and, though wounded by the now-repentant Moor, he manages to stab his wife and run away. He is however immediately pursued by Montano who arrests him and brings him back. Othello, out of remorse for his rash deed, now stabs himself in the presence of all, and dies falling upon the body of his wife and kissing it.

Gratiano, being the brother of Brabantio, succeeds to the property of Othello. Cassio, who is now appointed Governor of the place, is entrusted with the task of punishing Iago adequately for all his crimes now thoroughly revealed. Others return to Venice to report these occurrences to the Senate.

In a night scuffle, Roderigo is stabbed by Cassio who is also wounded in his leg, stealthily from behind, by Iago.



1. One crime begets a host of others to shield itself from discovery.
2. How one wrong involves the commission of other wrongs in order to justify itself!

(Pic. 53).

ACT V. SCENE I.—CYPRUS A STREET. THE NIGHT SCUFFLE.

IAGO: Here, stand behind this bulk¹, straight² will he come wear thy good rapier bare,³ and put it home: Quick, quick,⁵ fear nothing, I'll be at thy elbow: 't makes us, or it mars us.⁷ think on that, and fix most firm thy resolution.⁸

ROD: Be near at hand; I may miscarry in 't⁹

IAGO: Here, at thy hand be bold, and take thy stand. [Retires afar]

ROD: [To self.] I have no great devotion to 't¹⁰ the deed; and yet he hath given me satisfying reasons, 'tis but a man gone Forth, my sword: he dies¹¹

IAGO: [To Self.] I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,¹² and he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio, or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,—every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,¹³ he calls me to a restitution large¹⁴ of gold and jewels that I bobb'd¹⁵ from him, as gifts to Desdemona; it must not be¹⁶ If Cassio do remain, he hath a daily beauty in his life that makes me ugly,¹⁷ and besides, the Moor may unfold¹⁸ me to him; there stand I in much peril: no, he must die. Be 't so. I hear him coming. [Retires and hides.

Enter Cassio.

ROD: I know his gait;¹⁹ 'tis he. [To Cas.] Villain! thou diest. [Cuts him.

CAS: That thrust had been mine enemy indeed, but that my coat is better than thou know'st²⁰ I will make proof of thine²¹ [Draws and wounds Roderigo.

ROD: O, I am slain! [Falls. Iago, from behind, wounds Cassio in the leg, and exit.

CAS: I am maim'd²² for ever. Help, ho! murder! murder! [Falls.

1. Bulk the trunk of a tree in the street, or the projection of a house.
2. Straight directly this way 3. Wear . . . bare keep your good (or trusty) sword out of its cover (i.e. ready for action). 4. Put it home drive it straight or well. 5. Quick, quick be sharp in doing it, do not hesitate or fear. 6. At thy elbow . very near you. 7. It makes . . . us It may lead us to success (if well done), otherwise, it will defeat our plans and ruin us. 8. Fix . resolution Prose order is 'fix thy resolution most firmly;' meaning be firmly determined about it', (i.e. do not waver or get nervous over it) 9. I may miscarry in't I may fail in it, either by not doing it or doing it wrongly. 10. Great devotion to deep interest in it. 11. Forth . . . dies let my sword go forth, and he dies. 12. I have . . . the sense: (Quat pimple. Almost to the sense to produce an almost painful sensation. Roderigo is here spoken of contemptuously as a 'young quat; i.e. a low, irritable fellow) 13. Live Roderigo if Roderigo lives 14. Restitution large large restitution, heavy compensation 15. Bobb'd robbed or cheated. 16. It must not be such a thing should not occur; (i.e.) he should not live. 17. He hath . . . ugly he has merits (of body and mind which I lack and) which make me look insignificant or small. 18. Unfold . expose (me to him, by telling him all my accusations against him). 19. Gait: mode of walking 20. Enemy . . . knows't . killed me, proved fatal to me, if my coat-of-mail had not protected me better than you thought. 21. I will . . . thine I will prove that your coat is weaker, (i.e. I will make my thrust at you with a more deadly result than you did) 22. Maim'd mutilated, made lame.

OTHELLO, (ON HEARING THE CRY OF CASSIO).

OTH: The voice of Cassio: Iago keeps his word.

ROD: O, villain that I am!¹

OTH: It is even so.

CAS: O, help, ho! light! a surgeon!

OTH: 'Tis he. O brave Iago, honest and just, that hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong! Thou teachest me.² Minion,³ your dear lies dead, and your unblest fate hies;⁴ strumpet, I come! Forth of my heart, those charms, thine eyes, are blotted;⁵ thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.⁶ [Exit.

Enter Lodovico and Gratiano.

CAS: What, ho! no watch? no passage?⁷ murder! murder!

GRA: 'Tis some mischance;⁸ the cry is very direful.⁹

CAS: O, help!

LOD: Hark!

ROD: O wretched villain!

LOD: Two or three groan: it is a heavy¹⁰ night: these may be counterfeits.¹¹ let's think 't unsafe to come into the cry without more help.

ROD: Nobody come? then shall I bleed to death.

LOD: Hark!

Re-enter Iago, with a light.

GRA: Here's one comes in his shirt,¹² with light and weapons.

IAGO: Who's there? whose noise is this that cries on¹³ murder?

LOD: We do not know.

IAGO: Did not you hear a cry?

CAS: Here, here! for heaven's sake, help me!

IAGO: [Apart and at a distance]. What's the matter?

GRA: This is Othello's Ancient, as I take it.

LOD: The same indeed; a very valiant fellow.

IAGO: What are you, here, that cry so grievously?

1. Villain that I am: (to be set on by Iago to kill Cassio.) 2. Thou teachest me you set the example (by revenging yourself on Cassio, and thereby) teach me (to do the same with Desdemona.) 3. Minion darling; (said ironically with reference to Desdemona.) 4. And your.....hies. and your miserable end draws near. 5. Forth.....blotted. Prose order, 'those charms—thine eyes—are blotted forth of my heart.' The meaning is, I banish all the charms and attractions of yours that have hitherto dwelt in my mind. 6. Thy.....spotted: I shall take revenge on you by killing you on your very adulterous bed, (i.e. I will stain with your lustful blood the bed which you have contaminated with your lust.) 7. Passage passers-by. 8. Mischance: mishap or danger. 9. Direful: dreadful and distressing. 10. Heavy: dangerous and sorrowful. 11. Counterfeits: cheats or thieves (who pretend to be in distress) 12. In his shirt: in his night-dress (making it appear as if he is coming direct from his bed.) 13. On; again and again.

CAS: Iago ? O, I am spoil'd,¹ undone by villains ! Give me some help.

IAGO : O me, Lieutenant ! what villains have done this ?

CAS : I think that one of them is hereabout, and cannot make away.²

IAGO : O treacherous villains !

[To Lodo. and Grat.] What are you there ? come in and give some help.

ROD : O, help me here !

CAS . That's one of them.

IAGO : O murderous slave ' O villain ' [Runs and stabs Roderigo.

ROD : O damn'd Iago ! O inhuman dog !

IAGO : Kill men i' the dark !—Where be these bloody thieves ?³
How silent is this town ! Ho ! murder ! murder !

What may you be ? are you of good or evil ?⁴

LOD : As you shall prove us, praise us.⁵

IAGO : Signior Lodovico ?

LOD : He, sir.

IAGO . I cry you mercy.⁶ Here's Cassio hurt by villains.

GRA : Cassio !

IAGO : How is 't, brother ?

CAS : My leg is cut in two.

IAGO : Marry, heaven forbid ! Light gentlemen I'll bind it with my shirt.

1. Spoil'd, undone maimed and disabled. 2. Make away: run away.
3. Where . . . thieves where are the other murderous thieves? 4. Are
.. ..evil ? do you come here with good or bad intention? 5. As you .. us
regard us as you may presently find us 6. I cry you mercy . I beg your
pardon.

ENTER BIANCA.

Iago meets Bianca and tries to incriminate her too.

BIAN : What is the matter ? ho ! who is't that cried ?

IAGO : Who is't that cried !

BIAN : O my dear Cassio ! my sweet Cassio ! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio !

IAGO : O notable¹ strumpet ! Cassio, may you suspect
Who they should be that have thus mangled² you ?³

CAS : No.

GRA : I am sorry to find you thus :⁴ I have been to seek you.⁵

IAGO : Lend me a garter.⁶ So.⁷ O, for a chair,
To bear him easily⁸ hence !

BIAN : Alas, he faints ! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio !

IAGO : Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash⁹ to be a party in this injury. Patience awhile, good Cassio. Come, come : lend me a light. Know we this face¹⁰ or no ? Alas, my friend and my dear countryman Roderigo ! no :—yes, sure.—O heaven ! Roderigo.

GRA : What, of Venice ?

IAGO : Even he, sir : did you know him ?

GRA : Know him ! ay.

IAGO : Signior Gratiano ? I cry you gentle pardon :¹¹ these bloody accidents must excuse my manners, that so neglected you.¹²

GRA : I am glad to see you.

IAGO : How do you, Cassio ? O, a chair, a chair !

GRA : Roderigo ?

IAGO : He, he, 'tis he. [A chair brought in.] O, that's well said,¹³ the chair. Some good man bear him carefully from hence : I'll fetch the general's surgeon. [To Bianca] For you mistress, save you your labour.¹⁴ He that lies slain here, Cassio, was my dear friend. What malice¹⁵ was between you ?

CAS : None in the world : nor do I know the man.

IAGO . (To Bian) What, look you pale ? O, bear him out o' the air
[Cassio and Roderigo are borne off.]

1. Notable : notorious ; very infamous. 2. Mangled : cut ; or seriously wounded. 3. May you..... you ? · whom do you suspect as the persons who thus cut your leg ? 4. Thus : in this condition. 5. I have..... you : I have been all this time searching for you. 6 Garter : a ribbon for binding. 7. So : that ; (it is said in approval of the garter that must have been lent him). 8. Easily : with ease : (i.e.) without causing pain. 9 Trash : mean and useless thing ; said disparagingly of Bianca. (Note how Iago is here cleverly trying to implicate Bianca in the murderous deeds.) 10. This face · referring to Roderigo. 11. I cry.....pardon : I humbly beg your pardon. 12. Must excuse.....you · have upset me much and made me forget you, which is against my usual etiquette. 13. Well said : well thought of ; or well done. 14. Save you your labour : do not trouble yourself (about helping Cassio). 15. Malice : ill-feeling.

Stay you, good gentlemen.^a — Look you pale, mistress ? —
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?¹
Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.² —
Behold her well ; I pray you, look upon her ;
Do you see, gentlemen ? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.³

EMIL : ' Las, what's the matter ? what's the matter, husband ?

IAGO . Cassio hath here been set on⁴ in the dark
By Roderigo, and fellows that are 'scaped .
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

EMIL : Alas, good gentleman ! alas, good Cassio !

IAGO : This is the fruit of whoring⁵ Prithee, Emilia,
Go, know of⁶ Cassio where he supp'd to-night.
[To Bianca] What, do you shake⁷ at that ?

BIAN . He supp'd at my house ; but, I therefore shake not.

IAGO . O, did he so ? I charge you, go with me.

EMIL : Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet !

BIAN . I am no strumpet ; but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.⁸

EMIL : As I⁹ foh !⁹ fie upon thee !

IAGO . Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dress'd.
Come, mistress, you must tell's another tale.¹⁰
Emilia, run you to the citadel,
And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd !¹¹
Will you go on afore.¹² [Aside.] This is the night
That either makes me or fordoes me quite¹³

[Exit.

a Good gentlemen : Lodo and Grati. who are going away with Cassio.
1. The gastness of her eye the ghastliness of her look ; her frightened look. 2. Anon later ; in course of time. 3. Guiltiness.....use. crimes will (somehow) reveal themselves, though they that commit them may not speak out. (This expression is similar to 'Murder will out.') 4. Set on : waylaid and attacked. 5. This ... whoring : this is the (evil) result of visiting whores. 6. Go, know of : go and enquire or learn. 7. Shake: tremble. 8. But ofme : (Prose order) But I am of as honest a life as you etc ; This means ; I am as honest in my life as you who thus abuse me ; (i. e.) I am no worse than you in my dealings and conduct. 9. Foh : an expression of contempt. 10. Another tale . quite a different account ; the truth as contrasted with the deliberate lie with which you are attempting to hide or evade it. 11. Happ'd happened or occurred. 12. Go on afore : go in advance. 13. This is.....quite : This is the night that either brings me success or ruins me completely. (Iago means that all the wicked plans and devilish schemes he has been concocting and pushing on for days together have reached their climax that particular night "They will decide my fate one way or the other. Hence I have to be very careful this night ; for, the slightest oversight on my part will expose me and my villainous plans.")

Othello's mental agitation before killing Desdemona.



1. Look before you leap, and judge if your cause is really righteous.
2. A loving and noble nature will recoil from a bloody deed for its brutalizing effect.

(Pic. 54.)

Scene II. Othello in a Bedchamber of the castle. Desdemona in bed, asleep.

A light burning

OTHELLO'S SOLILOQUY—AND HIS MENTAL AGITATION.

OTH. It is the Cause, it is the Cause,¹ my soul,—let me not name it to you, you chaste stars¹—It is the Cause. Yet, I'll not shed her blood,² nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow, and smooth as monumental alabaster³ Yet, she must die,⁴ else she'll betray⁵ more men.

Put out this light, and then, put out that light.⁶ If I quench thee, thou flaming minister!⁷ I can again thy former light restore, should I repent me. But, once put out thy light,⁸ —thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,⁹ —I know not where is that Promethean heat¹⁰ that can thy light relume.¹¹ When I have pluck'd the rose,¹² I cannot give it vital growth again, it must needs wither; I'll smell¹³ it on the tree,—[Kisses her.] Ah! balmy¹⁴ breath, that dost almost persuade Justice to break her sword!¹⁵ One more, one more;—Be thus¹⁶ when thou art dead, and I will kill thee, and love thee after¹⁷;—One more, and this the last. So sweet was ne'er so fatal.¹⁸ I must weep, but they are cruel tears: this sorrow's heavenly,¹⁹ it strikes where it doth love.²⁰ She wakes.

1. Cause. here means the sole motive or reason for his resolution to kill Desdemona. The 'Cause' refers to her alleged misconduct. Othello is so shocked by her crime that he would not mention it even by name for fear of offending the chaste stars or heavenly lights. Hence he calls the motive or reason 'the Cause'. Othello is here perturbed in his mind, not because he is afraid of the act of killing Desdemona, but because of the difficulty to associate such a crime with her, of whose chastity he had a very high opinion. 2. I'll not blood. for fear of spoiling her lovely, snow-white and smooth complexion. 3. Monumental alabaster. a kind of smooth marble used in building monuments for the dead. 4. Yet.... die by some other means than by shedding her blood. 5. Betray deceive; or prove treacherous to. 6. Put out..... light First, let me put out the light (of the candle); and then, put out that (or her) light (i.e., the light of her life). This means. 'I will kill her in the dark, so that I may not feel any more pity by the contemplation of her lovely form and complexion.' 7. Thou flaming minister referring to the burning candle. 8. Thy light. Desdemona's life. 9. Thounature. you (who are) the exquisite piece or sample of Nature's choice workmanship. 10. Promethean heat heavenly fire; (Prometheus was an ancient Greek god who stole fire from heaven and gave it to man. For this he was punished by Zeus). 11. Relume. relight or rekindle. 12. The Rose: this is a metaphor referring to Desdemona's life. 13. Smell: use or enjoy. 14. Balmy sweet-smelling. 15. That.....sword. that almost induces one to refrain from dealing justice. (Justice is here personified as a goddess holding a pair of scales in one hand and a sword in the other). 16. Thus: as lovely as now. 17. I will.after I kill you, not because I do not love you, but because of the Cause. 18. So ...fatal. so sweet, yet so poisonous (because of your misconduct). 19. Heavenly heaven-sent; (the result of pure and noble thoughts). 20. It.....love: it loves and it also corrects the object of its love.

Desdemona remonstrates, but Othello is proof against conviction.



The raging demon of Jealousy (or Greed), ever deaf to the Voice of Reason, is ready to devour its victim.

(Pic. 55.)

OTHELLO ASKS DESDEMONA TO PRAY BEFORE HE KILLS HER.

She remonstrates but he is proof against Conviction.

DES : Who's there ? Othello ?

OTH : Ay, Desdemona.

DES . Will you come to bed, my lord ?

OTH : Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona ?

DES : Ay, my lord.

OTH : If you bethink yourself of any crime unreconcil'd as yet to Heaven and grace,¹ solicit² for it straight.

DES : Alas, my lord ! what may you mean by that ?

OTH : Well, do it, and be brief ; I will walk by : I would not kill thy unprepared³ spirit ; no, Heaven forfend ! I would not kill thy soul.⁴

DES : Talk you of killing ?

OTH : Ay, I do.

DES . Then Heaven have mercy on me !

OTH : Amen, with all my heart !⁵

DES : If you say so, I hope you will not kill me.

OTH : Hum !

DES : And yet I fear you ; for you are fatal then when your eyes roll so : why I should fear I know not, since guiltiness I know not ; but yet I feel I fear.

OTH . Think on thy sins.

DES : They are loves I bear to you.

OTH : Ay, and for that thou diest.

DES : That death's unnatural that kills for loving. Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip,⁶ Some bloody passion shakes your very frame :⁷ these are portents ;⁸ but yet I hope, I hope, they do not point on⁹ me.

OTH : Peace, and be still !

DES : I will so¹⁰. What's the matter ?

1. Unreconcil'd.....grace : (for which) you have not repented and made peace with God and his mercy. 2. Solicit : ask or pray. 3. Unprepared unrepentant. 4. Heaven.....soul : let God forbid me from taking away your soul while it is still unprepared. 5. Amen.....heart : I too say the same very heartily. 6. Gnaw.....lip : take the lower lip between your teeth as if to bite it; (this is a sign of anger.) 7. Some.....frame : your whole body is trembling with some awful and blood-thirsty spirit of revenge. 8. Portents . signs indicating coming evil. 9. On : to. 10. I will so : I will do so.

THOU GAV'ST MY HANDKERCHIEF TO CASSIO !

OTH : That handkerchief which I so lov'd and gave thee, thou gav'st to Cassio

DES : No, by my life and soul ! Send for the man and ask him.

OTH : Sweet soul, take heed, take heed of perjury,¹ thou'rt on thy death-bed.

DES : Ay, but not yet to die.

OTH : Yes, presently ; therefore confess thee freely of thy sin ; for, to deny each article with oath cannot remove, nor choke the strong conception that I do groan withal.² Thou art to die.

DES : Then, Lord have mercy on me !

OTH : I say, amen.

DES : And have you mercy too ! I never did offend you in my life ; never lov'd Cassio but with such general warranty of Heaven as I might love ;³ I never gave him token⁴

OTH : By Heaven, I saw my handkerchief in's hand. O perjur'd woman !⁵ thou dost stone⁶ my heart, and mak'st me call what I intend to do a murder which I thought a sacrifice.⁷ I saw the handkerchief.

DES : He found it then ; I never gave it him. Send for him hither ; let him confess a truth

OTH : He hath confess'd..... that he hath used thee.

DES : How? unlawfully ?

OTH : Ay.

DES : He will not say so.

OTH . No, his mouth is stopp'd,⁸ honest Iago hath tak'n order⁹ for it.

DES : O ! my fear interprets.¹⁰ What, is he dead ?

OTH : Had all his hairs been lives, my great revenge had stomach for them all.¹¹

1. Take.....perjury : take care that you do not commit perjury (or, false swearing by uttering a lie). 2. For...withal : because, however much you may deny every one of these facts even on oath, it will not remove or suppress the strong (or firmly established) conviction that is oppressing me heavily. 3. But with.....love : except in such a general way as is sanctioned by the moral usage of Society by which I can love (or like) anybody. 4. Token · sign (of love.) 5. Perjur'd woman : (or a liar.) 6. Stone : harden. 7. And mak'st.....sacrifice : you are lying ; you are therefore hardening my heart, and hence invest the action (of taking your life) which I intend doing, with the name of 'murder' (out of blood-thirsty revenge for your life) rather than a 'sacrifice or holy offering' (in the cause of virtue.) 8. His.....stopped : because Othello believes him to have been killed by Iago. 9. Tak'n order : arranged for it (with my sanction.) 10. My fear interprets : my fear forebodes some calamity (to him.) 11. Had.....all : my revenge against him was so great or unsatiable, unquenchable that I would have killed him again and again (without the feeling of disgust or fatigue), even if he had as many lives as he had hairs on his body.

POOR DESDEMONA PLEADS FOR HER LIFE BUT IN VAIN

DES . Alas, he is betray'd, and I undone ¹ [Weeps.

OTH : Out, strumpet ! weep'st thou for him to my face .

DES . O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not !

OTH . Down, strumpet !

DES Kill me to-morrow ; let me live to-night.

1. He . undone he has fallen a victim to treachery, and i have been rendered helpless (undone . ruined) Cassio, she thinks, can no longer appear to confirm the truth of her statement.

Othello now stifles Desdemona in her bed.



Evil passions tend to liberate the Beast in Man and cry for blood.

(Pic. 56.)

OTHELLO STRANGLES DESDEMONA TO DEATH.

OTH. Nay, if you strive,—[Starts stifling her.

DES: (Let me live) But half an hour!

OTH: Being done, there is no pause.¹

DES: But while I say one prayer!

OTH: It is too late [He smothers her.

Emilia arrives at the Door and Shouts.

EMIL: [Within.] My lord, my lord! what, ho! my lord, my lord!

OTH: What noise is this? Not dead? not yet quite dead?

I that am cruel am yet merciful;²

I would not have thee linger in thy pain:

So, so.

[He is again smothering her.

1. Being.....pause having once made up my mind, I would carry out my resolve without any pause or waste of time. 2. Merciful (read, 'and therefore',—after this word.)

After the murder, Othello is perplexed whether he should let in Emilia or not.



1. Confusion is worse confounded, following upon a bloody deed.
2. A bloody deed may satisfy one's blood-thirsty passion but it ever doth leave a hideous memory behind.

(Pic. 57.)

OTHELLO'S PERPLEXITY AFTER THE MURDER

EMIL · [Within] What, ho ! my lord, my lord !

OTH Who's there ?

EMIL · [Within] O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you !

OTH Yes, 'tis Emilia. By and by.¹ She's dead.²

'Tis like³ she comes to speak of Cassio's death

The noise was high. Ha ! no more moving !

Still⁴ as the grave ! Shall she⁵ come in ? were 't good ?

I think she⁶ stirs again ;—No, What's best to do ?

If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife ;

My wife ! my wife ! what wife ? I have no wife.

O, insupportable !⁷ O heavy hour !⁸

Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse

Of sun and moon, and that the affrighted globe

Should yawn at alteration⁹

EMIL · [Within] I do beseech you that I may speak with you, O,
good my lord !

OTH I had forgot thee O, come in, Emilia. Soft,—by and by,—
let me the curtains draw. Where art thou ? [He unlocks the door and
Emilia enters.]

1. By and by . presently or in a moment, (this is said in answer to Emilia's call.) 2. She's dead : (from here to the end of the para, Othello speaks in short and disjointed sentences. This indicates the confused and agitated state of his mind after the murder.) 3. Like likely. 4. Still silent and motionless. 5. She refers to Emilia. 6. She Desdemona 7. Insupportable unbearable (situation) 8 Heavy hour time hanging heavily on me ; sorrowful and oppressive (to me) 9 Methinksalteration I think that there should now be a total eclipse of the Sun and the Moon followed in turn by serious earthquakes. (After Desdemona's death, 'chaos' seems to have come over Othello's mind, and he is in a most gloomy and disturbed state. He fancies that the whole world has become immersed in total darkness by the eclipse of the Sun and the Moon, and that terrifying earthquakes are taking place. This has reference to a general superstition that eclipses are followed by calamities to the Earth and the people therein). Should yawn . should crack or burst open At alteration . alternately, in turn ; in quick succession ; or as an immediate consequence. This sentence is rather obscure.

Emilia, admitted into the room, is horrified at the sight, and reveals the truth of Iago's villainy.



Truth, tho' long suppressed, when revealed, has a horrifying effect.

(Pic. 58.)

Emilia is horrified at the sight; and on learning the Facts, gets angry with Othello and reveals Iago's Villainy.

OTH: What's the matter with thee now?

EMIL: O, my good lord, yonder's foul murder done!

OTH: What, now?

EMIL: But now, my lord.

OTH: It is the very error of the moon; she comes more near the earth than she was wont, and makes men mad.¹

EMIL: Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Venetian call'd Roderigo.

OTH: Roderigo kill'd! and Cassio kill'd!

EMIL: No, Cassio is not kill'd.

OTH: Not Cassio kill'd! then murder's out of tune, and sweet revenge grows harsh.²

DES: O, falsely, falsely murder'd!

EMIL: Alas, what cry is that?

OTH: That! what?

EMIL: [Rushing towards the bed] Out,³ and alas! that was my lady's voice:—Help! help, ho! help! O lady, speak again! Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!

DES: A guiltless death I die.⁴

EMIL: O, who hath done this deed?

DES: Nobody; I myself; farewell: commend me⁵ to my kind lord. O, farewell! [Dies]

OTH: Why, how should she be murder'd?⁶

EMIL: Alas, who knows?

OTH: You heard her say herself, it was not I.

EMIL: She said so; (but) I must needs report the truth.

1. It is.....mad: it is all due to the Moon's wandering away from her path and coming nearer the earth than usual; and this makes men mad. (Here is a combination of fact and fiction. The fact is that the Moon has some influence on certain weak-minded persons, like the insane who become more violent than usual on the new-moon and the full-moon days. The fiction or popular superstition is that the Moon at times deviates from her path, when she makes all men mad. N. B. Hence the relation between the words 'Luna' the Moon, and 'Lunacy' meaning 'insanity.') 2. Then.....harsh in that case, the murder has been misplaced—that is, a wrong person has been murdered.)—and the spirit of vengeance, not yet having been satisfied, is still present in me in all its harshness or virulence. (Out of tune. out of its set or plotted path.) 3 Out get out of the way. 4. A.....die: I am dying a guiltless death, i. e. an innocent death. (I am dying without having committed any fault.) 5 Commend me convey my good wishes to; (Desdemona's unbounded love to Othello makes her screen him even when she is in the last gasp of death.) 6. How.murder'd?, in what manner or by whom etc.? (who could have possibly killed her?)

EMILIA IS AMAZED AND STUNNED AT THE DISCOVERY¹

OTH She's like a liar gone to burning hell¹; 'twas I that kill'd her.

EMIL. O, the more angel she, and you the blacker devil!²

OTH She turn'd to folly,³ and she was a whore

EMIL Thou dost belie her,⁴ and thou art a devil.

OTH She was false as water⁵

EMIL Thou art rash as fire,⁶ to say that she was false: O, she was heavenly true!⁷

OTH Cassio did top⁸ her, ask thy husband else Or, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell, but that I did proceed upon just grounds to this extremity.⁹ Thy husband knew it all.

EMIL My husband'

OTH Thy husband.

EMIL. That she was false to wedlock?

OTH Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true, if Heaven would make me such another world of one entire and perfect chrysolite, I'd not have sold her for it¹⁰

EMIL My husband!

OTH: Ay, 'twas he that told me first. an honest man he is, and hates the slime that sticks on filthy deeds.¹¹

EMIL. My husband'

OTH: What needs this iteration,¹² woman? I say thy husband.

EMIL: O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love!¹³—My husband say that she was false!

1. She hell: she told a lie and has therefore gone to the burning hell. (Othello's open mind may be noted here, he does not hide the truth, though it incriminates him with the murder.) 2. O, the moredevil Alas, in that case, she is all the more angelic (in that she loved you still and tried to save you), and you are all the more devilish (for having killed her, and consigned her to hell.) 3. Turn'd to folly: turned to adultery. (i.e. became adulterous.) 4. Belie her: slander her by uttering a falsehood against her. 5. She... .water: she was as treacherous as water (Water is believed to be unreliable, both for drink and crossing. When it looks clear, it may contain poisonous matter, and when it looks shallow and easily fordable, it may really be deep and full of eddies.) 6. Rash as fire: reckless as fire (that burns good and bad alike, without distinction and pity.) 7. Heavenly true: as true as heaven, i.e. perfectly pure. 8. Top: top or cover; i.e. lie on. 9. I were...extremity: I would deserve to be damned or tortured in the deepest hell, if I had not acted according to lawful (and adequate) reasons in adopting this extreme step (i. e. killing her.) 10. Nayfor it: but, if she had been true (or chaste and loyal) to me and if the world had been made by God entirely of one precious stone (such as chrysolite or diamond), even then I would not have exchanged her for such a world. 11. Hates.....deeds: cannot bear even the sight of the dirty or ugly garb or appearance of wicked deeds. 12. Iteration: repetition. 13. Villainy... .love: Villainy has made a mockery of (or betrayed) your love, (i.e. some villainous person has taken advantage of, and played upon, your loving nature and brought you to this end.)

EMILIA SCOLDS AND CONDEMNS OTHELLO FOR HIS FOLLY.

OTH : He, woman : I say, thy husband : dost understand the word ?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

EMIL : If he say so, may his pernicious soul rot half a grain a day ¹
he lies to the heart ² she was too fond of her most filthy
bargain ³

OTH . Ha ! [Threatens to kill her.]

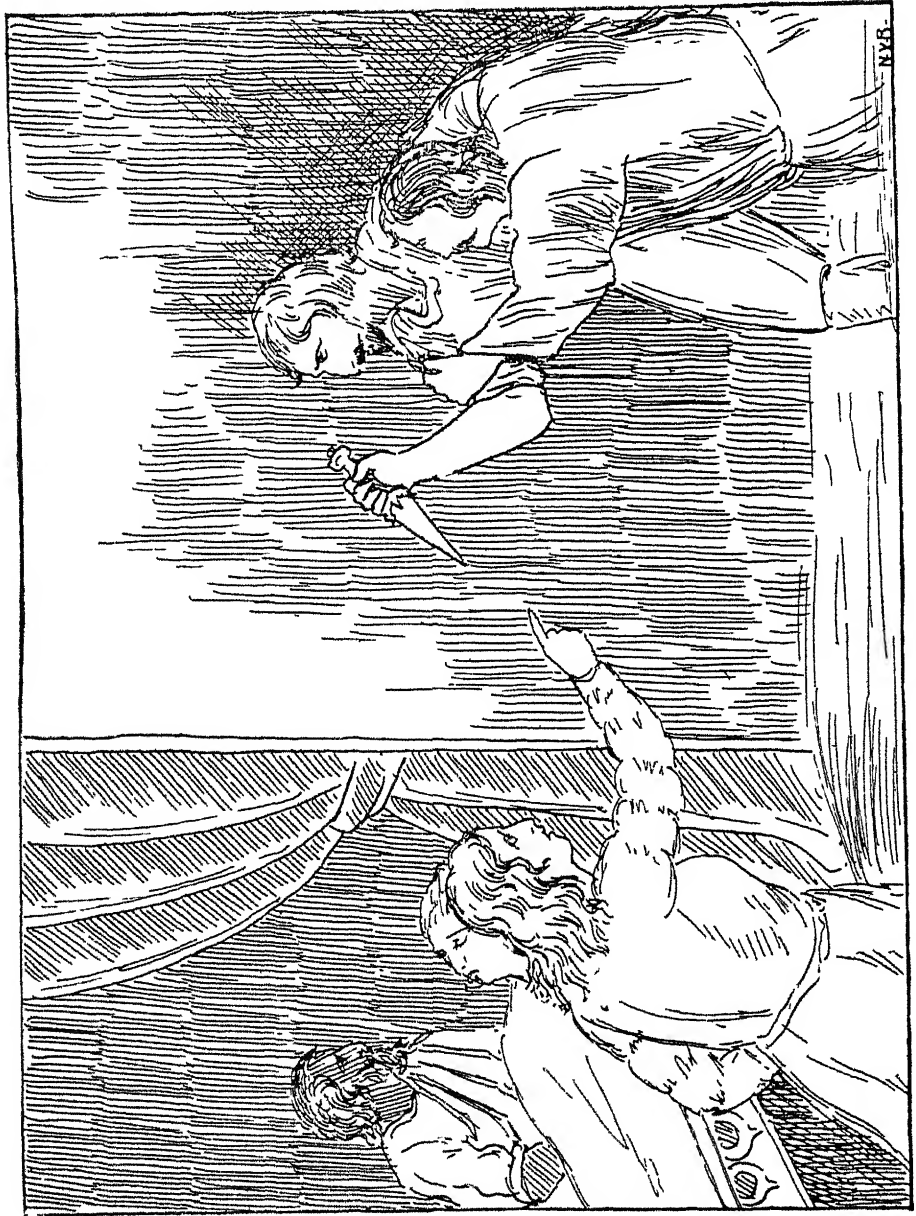
EMIL . Do thy worst this deed of thine is no more worthy Heaven
than thou wast worthy her ⁴

OTH : Peace, you were best ⁵

EMIL : Thou hast not half the power to do me harm as I have to be
hurt.⁶ O gull⁷ O dolt⁸ as ignorant as dirt!⁹ thou hast done a
deed,—I care not for thy sword , I'll make thee known, though
I lost twenty lives. Help ! help, ho ! help ! The Moor hath
kill'd my mistress ! Murder ! murder !

1. May... ..day may his wicked and cursed soul suffer a slow and lingering torture every day of his life, (i e. let him rot by slow degrees) 2. He. . . heart he lies to the depth of his heart, i e. whole heartedly, (what he has told you is a downright and unmitigated lie) 3. She . bargain She was excessively fond of the very dirty person (i.e. you) whom she married. 4. This . .her this deed (murder) of yours is as much unworthy of Heaven as you were unworthy of her, (you were not a fit person to love and live with her ; i e. appreciate her fully). 5 Peace, you were best it were best for you to hold your peace ; (i e you had better keep quiet, and do not talk like that). 6. Thou . . hurt . you have not got as much power to hurt me as I have power to endure the hurt (this means, your threat of harm has no effect on me or does not terrify me ; i e I will speak out). 7 Gull . fool 8 Dolt idiot. 9. As.... dirt as dull as the dense earth.

Emilia exposes Iago's villainy and denounces him to his face before Othello : Iago tries to stab her but is balked, in his first attempt, by Gratiano.



Villainy ever tries not only to deny its guilt but also to destroy or misinterpret the proofs of its guilt.

(Pic. 59.)

Enter Montano, Gratiano, Iago and others.

EMILIA'S INDIGNATION AT, AND EXPOSURE OF, IAGO

MON: What is the matter? How now, General!

EMIL: O, are you come, Iago? You have done well, that men must lay their murders on your neck.¹

GRA What is the matter?

EMIL: Disprove this villain if thou be'st a man;² he says thou told'st him that his wife was false. I know thou did'st not, thou'rt not such a villain. Speak, for my heart is full³

IAGO: I told him what I thought, and told no more than what he found himself was apt and true.

EMIL: But did you ever tell him she was false?

IAGO: I did.

EMIL: You told a lie, an odious damned lie;⁴ upon my soul a lie, a wicked lie; she, false with Cassio!—Did you say with Cassio?

IAGO: With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.⁵

EMIL: I will not charm my tongue: I am bound to speak,—my mistress here lies murder'd in her bed,—

ALL: O Heavens forfend!

EMIL: And your reports have set the murder on.⁶

OTH: Nay, stare not, masters; it is true, indeed.

GRA 'Tis a strange truth.

MON: O monstrous act!⁷

EMIL: Villany, villany, villany! I think upon 't,⁸—I think,—I smell't.⁹—O villany!—I thought so then;¹⁰—I'll kill myself for grief!¹¹—O villany, villany!

1. That menneck that men must fasten the responsibility for these murders on your shoulders (i.e. on you). 2. Disprove .man if you are manly (and courageous), prove the falsehood of this villain (i.e. Othello) (She calls the latter so for his murder of Desdemona). 3. Full filled with sorrow: (sorrow for the lady that has been murdered, and for you who have been implicated). 4. An odious damned lie: a disgusting and infernal lie. 5. Charm your tongue hold your tongue; or, be silent. 6. Youron: your allegations (against her) have led to her murder. 7. Both Gratiano and Montano are horrified at the fact, and express their feelings of amazement and disgust in different ways; the first speaks of it as a 'strange' or incredible truth, and the second calls it a 'monstrous' or devilish act. 8. I think upon it: I recollect it now; (i.e. the incident of the handkerchief). 9. I smell't: I trace or infer villainy in this. (This figure of speech has reference to the hounds tracking an animal's course or presence by means of smell). 10. Then: at the time (when Iago snatched the handkerchief from my hand and asked me not to reveal the fact to others.—"Be not acknown on 't.") 11. I'll.....grief the grief (for the careless or thoughtless act of mine) will prey upon my mind and kill me.

IAGO. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.

EMIL: Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak; 'tis proper I obey him, but not now. Perchance Iago, I will ne'er go home.¹

OTH: O! O! O! [Falls on the bed.]

EMIL: Nay, lay thee down and roar, for thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent, that e'er did lift up eye.²

OTH [Rising] O! she was foul. [To Grat] I scarce did know you, uncle.³ There lies your niece, whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd,⁴ I know this act shows⁵ horrible and grim⁶

GRA: Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead. Thy match was mortal to him;⁷ and pure grief shore his old thread in twain;⁸ did he live now, this sight would make him do a desperate turn, yea, cuse his better angel from his side, and fall to reprobation.⁹

Othello mentions Iago's accusation and the Handkerchief.

OTH: 'Tis pitiful; but yet Iago knows that she with Cassio hath the act of shame a thousand times¹⁰ committed; Cassio confess'd it; and she did gratify his amorous works with that recognizance and pledge of love which I first gave her.¹¹ I saw it in his hand. It was a handkerchief, an antique¹² token my father gave my mother.

EMIL: O heaven! O heavenly powers!

IAGO: Come, hold your peace.

EMIL: 'Twill out! 'twill out!¹³ I hold my peace, sir? no; no, I will speak as liberal as the north;¹⁴ let heaven and men and devils, let them all, all, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak

1. Perchance... home Emilia thinks it possible that, for her exposure of Iago, she might be killed by him. She seems to have the same presentiment now of her coming death, as Desdemona had of hers before. 2. The sweetest.... eye: the most lovely and innocent creature (i.e. Desdemona) that ever gazed upon this world (i.e. that ever lived). 3. I scarce... uncle: I did not know you were here, uncle. 4. Whose.....stopped: whom I have only just now killed. 5. Shows: shows itself to be; i. e. appears as. 6. Grim: hideous; fierce and forbidding. 7. Thy.....him: your marriage proved deadly to him; (i. e. brought about his death). 8. And.....twain: for, excessive sorrow preyed upon his mind so much that it ended in his death (Shore...twain: this is a metaphor in which life is compared to a thread. Shore: sheared or cut with scissors.) 9. Did he.....reprobation if he had lived now, this (ghastly) sight (of his daughter's murder) would have made him desperate and caused him to commit an act (i. e. suicide), which being a great sin, would taint his soul with impurity and send it to hell. Reprobation: perdition or hell. 10. Thousand.....times: several times or frequently. 11. She.....her: she satisfied his lustful desires with that remembrance and token of my love which I had originally given her. 12. Antique: old (and therefore sacred). 13. 'Twill out: the secret will be out or will come out; (repeated for the sake of emphasis.) 14. I will.....north: I will speak as freely, as cuttingly or stingingly as the icy and freely blowing northern wind.

EMILIA EXPLAINS THE MYSTERY BUT IAGO RESENTS IT AND STABS HER.

IAGO . Be wise, and get you home.

EMIL : I will not. [Iago offers to stab Emilia.

GRA : Fie ! Your sword upon a woman !

EMIL . O thou dull¹ Moor ! that handkerchief thou speak'st of
I found by fortune² and did give my husband ,
For, often with a solemn earnestness,
More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,³
He begg'd of me to steal it.

IAGO : Villanous whore !

EMIL : She give it Cassio ! No alas ! I found it,
And I did give't my husband.

IAGO : Filth,⁴ thou liest !

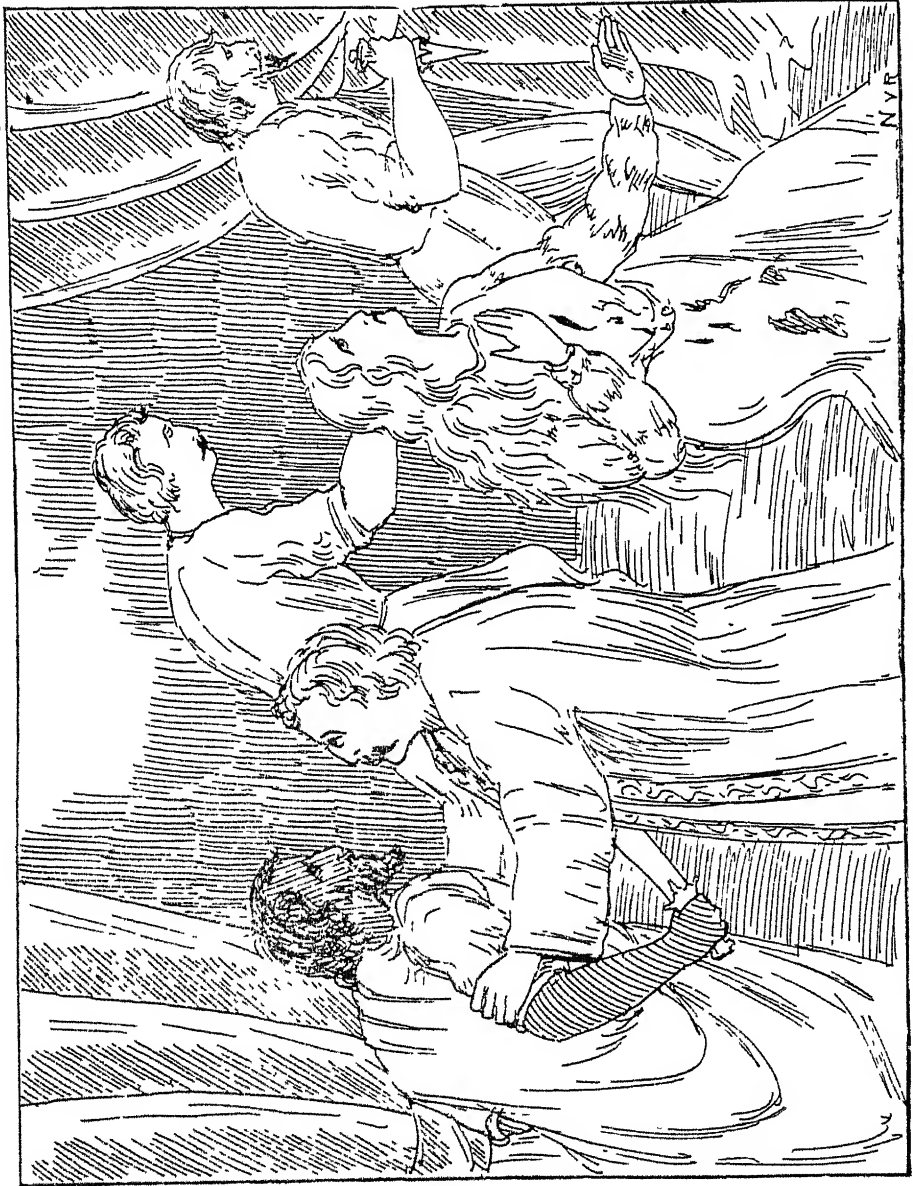
EMIL : By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.
O murderous coxcomb !⁵ what should such a fool
Do with so good a wife ?⁶

OTH : Are there no stones in Heaven
But what serve for the thunder ?⁷ Precious⁸ villain !

[He runs at Iago ; Iago, from behind, stabs Emilia, and runs out.

1. Dull : dense-headed ; or, stupid 2. Fortune · chance. 3. With..... trifle · more seriously than was necessary for such a small and common thing. 4 Filth: dirty woman. 5 Murderous coxcomb · a conceited fool, committing a murder 6. What.....wife ? how could such a fool know the value of such a good wife ? 7. Arethunder : are there no more thunder-bolts in Heaven to spare (for destroying this villain i.e. Iago). 8. Precious peerless, i.e. perfect.

Othello, on learning of Iago's treachery and villainy, rushes at and wounds Iago, but is disarmed by Gratiano: Iago, from behind, fatally stabs Emilia and runs out, but is pursued by Montano.



When Truth dawns, O, how painful is the disillusion of the Dupes and Gulls!

(Pic, 60.)

GRA : The woman falls ; sure, he hath kill'd his wife.

EMIL : Ay, ay ; O, lay me by my mistress' side.

GRA : He's gone ; but his wife's kill'd.

MON . 'Tis a notorious¹ villain. Take you this weapon,

Which I have here recover'd from the Moor.

Come, guard the door without ; let him not pass,

But kill him rather.² I'll after that same villain,³

For, 'tis a damned slave.⁴

[Exit Mon. and Gra.]

OTH : I am not valiant neither,⁵

But every puny whipster gets my sword.⁶

But why should honour outlive honesty ?⁷

Let it go all.

EMIL : What did thy song bode, lady ?⁸

Hark, canst thou hear me ? I will play the swan,

And die in music —⁹ [Singing —Willow, willow, willow]

Moor, she was chaste ; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor ,

So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true ;¹⁰

So speaking as I think, I die, I die. [Dies.]

OTH I have another weapon in this chamber ,¹¹

It is a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper.¹²—

O ! here it is. Uncle, I must come forth.¹³

GRA . [From outside the room.] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear.¹⁴

Thou hast no weapon and perforce must suffer.¹⁵

OTH : Look in upon me then, and speak with me,

Or, naked¹⁶ as I am, I will assault thee.

1. Notorious infamous. 2. Come . rather. (Montano here gives strict orders to others to keep proper guard at the door of Othello's room for fear that, in his desperate mood, he might kill others or himself). If ever he attempted to pass the guard, he should rather be killed than be allowed to escape. 3. Same villain i. e. Iago. 4. Damned slave. hellish scoundrel. 5. I . neither I am not strong or courageous. (This is the result of the nervous shock he has recently experienced.) Neither this has no meaning here 6 But .. sword, for, every little contemptible fellow is able to snatch away my sword from me 7. Buthonesty but (i.e. in such a case) how can I live in honour when my honesty is doubted ? (Honesty refers to his honest motive in killing Desdemona.) Honesty may also be taken to refer to Desdemona The meaning will then be—When Desdemona, the embodiment of honesty, as she is now proved to be, is no more, why should I tho', representing the cause of honour, survive her? Let both honour and honesty go. 8. 'Lady' addressed to Desdemona, lying dead. 9. I will.....music like the traditional swan that is believed to die singing, I shall also sing and die. 10. So .true because I speak the truth, therefore let my soul come to bliss ; (i. e I deserve to go to Heaven.) 11. In this chamber : in this scabbard (referring to another weapon he has underneath his garment.) 12. The ice-brook's temper : tempered in icy cold water of the brook. 13. Come forth . come out of the room. 14. It .. .dear . it will cost you your life: 15. Perforce must suffer : necessarily obey orders. 16. Naked : unarmed.

Othello's mental remorse and anguish on learning the truth of Desdemona's innocence and his own foolish rashness.



How racking and unbearable is the agony of Remorse in a noble nature on the discovery of its fatal Folly, false Belief or Conviction !

(Pic. 61.)

REMORSE-STRICKEN OTHELLO SUFFERS ALL THE EXCRUCIATING AGONY.

Gratiano re-enters the room.

GRA What is the matter?

OTH Behold, I have another weapon,
A better never did itself sustain¹
Upon a soldier's thigh. I have seen the day,
That, with this little arm and this good sword,
I have made my way through more impediments
Than twenty times your stop.²

But, O vain boast!
Who can control his fate? 'Tis not so now.³ —
Be not afraid though you do see me weapon'd,
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,⁴
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.⁵
Do you go back dismay'd? 'Tis a lost tear, —
Man but a rush⁶ against Othello's breast,
And he retires: Where should Othello go?⁷ [wrench¹¹

[Turning to Des.] Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd
Pale as thy smock!¹² when we shall meet at compt,¹³
This look of thine will hurl my soul from Heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it.¹⁴ Cold, cold, my girl!
Even like thy chastity. — O cursed slave! —

Whip me, ye devils!
From the possession of this heavenly sight!¹⁵
Blow me about in winds!¹⁶ roast me in sulphur!¹⁷
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!¹⁸ —
O Desdemon! dead Desdemon! dead! O! O! O!

1. Did itself sustain supported itself, i.e. hung. 2. I have...stop I have passed through much greater obstacles than what you now interpose before me. Than...stop than twenty times as much as the one created by your stop. 3. 'Tis not so now in my present circumstances, for me to attempt to control or mend my fate is altogether out of question. (Things must run their course). 4. Journey's end the end of my life. (Life is here compared to a journey). 5. Butt the end, (generally the end of the musket or rifle). 6. Very...sail the utmost limit to which my sail or ship can go. (I have come to the end of my voyage). 7. Do...dismay'd? Why do you retire in fear? 8. Lost useless or unnecessary. 9. Man...rush man is but a reed or straw 10. Go escape. 11. O ill-starr'd wench O girl, born under evil or unlucky stars i.e. O unfortunate girl. 12. Pale as thy smock thou art as pale or colorless as thy smock (white frock) 13. At compt: at counting; i.e. the Day of Judgment. 14. This look...at it this very look (innocence) of yours will be enough to throw me down from Heaven to Hell to be snatched and torn by the devils. 15. Whip...sight. O ye devils, whip or chase me away from this (room where I look upon this) angelic person. 16. Blow...winds scatter or knock me about (as it) by the force of winds 17. Roast me in sulphur burn me slowly in the sulphurous fires (of Hell). 18. Wash,...fire drown me in the great depths of flaming fire.

Lodovico, with letters in his hand, looks at Montano; Cassio is carried in a chair. Officers bring Iago as prisoner; Othello stares at Iago and questions Cassio.



Understanding comes, alas! when it is too late to undo the mischief.

(Pic. 62.)

Enter Lodovico, Montano, Cassio carried in a chair, and Officers with Iago as a prisoner.

LOD : Where is this rash and most unfortunate man ?

OTH : That's he that was Othello¹, here I am.

LOD : Where is that viper² bring the villain forth.

OTH : I look down towards his feet,³ but that's false.⁴ If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee. [Wounds Iago.]

LOD : Wrench his sword from him

AGO : I bleed, sir, but not kill'd.

OTH : I am not sorry neither, I'd have thee live, for, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.⁵

LOD : O thou Othello, that wert once so good fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,⁶ what shall be said to thee ?

OTH : Why, anything an honourable murderer, if you will, for nought did I in hate, but all in honour.⁷

LOD : This wretch⁸ hath part confess'd his villainy did you and he consent in Cassio's death ?

OTH : Ay.

Othello now begs Cassio's pardon.

CAS : Dear general, I never gave you cause.

OTH : I do believe it, and I ask your pardon. Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil⁹ why he hath thus ensnared¹⁰ my soul and body ?

AGO : Demand me nothing, what you know, you know : from this time forth I never will speak word.

LOD : What, not to pray ?

GRA : Torments¹¹ will ope your lips.

OTH : Well, thou dost best.¹²

1. That's . . . Othello that (rash and most unfortunate man) is the person who was known as Othello, the brave and honorable Moor. 2. Viper referring to Iago as a low, despicable and poisonous creature. 3. His feet in order to find out whether they are cloven, as they are in a devil. 4. Fable fiction, not a fact. 5. I am to die I am not sorry that you are not killed, I would rather like you to continue to live, for according to my view, if you die, you will be free from misery, (i.e. death will give you a happy release which I do not like you to have). 6. Fall'n . . . slave fallen a victim to the evil practices or plans of a devilish villain. 7. For, nought . . . honour for, I did not do anything out of hate or spite, but through a sense of honour, i.e. actuated by principles of honour or upright conduct. 8. This wretch refers to Iago. 9. Demi-devil 'demi or semi' means half, half devil, i.e. devil in character but human in form. It means a great or damned villain. 10. Ensnared entrapped or ruined. 11. Torments tortures. 12. Thou dost best (after all) it is best for you (i.e. Iago) to be silent, (because your villainy is already well established without the least doubt).

LOD : Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo,
And here another ; the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook¹
By Roderigo.

OTH : O villain !

CAS : Most heathenish² and most gross !³

LOD : Now, here's another discontented paper,⁴
Found in his pocket too , and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain ;
But that, belike,⁵ Iago in the interim⁶
Came in and satisfied him.⁷

OTH : O the pernicious caitiff !⁸
How came you Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's ?

CAS I found it in my chamber ;
And he himself confess'd but even now
That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose
Which wrought to his desire.⁹

OTH : O fool ! fool ! fool !

CAS : There is besides in Roderigo's letter,
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch ; whereon it came
That I was cast ; and even but now he spake
After long seeming dead, Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

1. Imports.... undertook - implies or refers to the death of Cassio to be undertaken or accomplished by Roderigo. 2. Heathenish : unchristian (deserving damnation beyond redemption.) 3. Gross : glaring. 4. Discontented paper : paper full of discontents (i.e. complaints.) 5. Belike. very likely. 6. Interim : interval or meantime. 7. Satisfied him : pacified him (by giving him "satisfying" reasons.) 8. Pernicious caitiff - Captive ; or, a low and mean fellow that is dangerous. 9. Wrought to his desire : worked towards or promoted (i. e. accomplished) his desire.

LOD: You must forsake this room, and go with us
 Your power and your command is taken off,
 And Cassio rules in Cyprus For this slave,
 If there be any cunning¹ cruelty
 That can torment him much and hold him long,²
 It shall be his You shall close prisoner rest,
 Till that³ the nature of your fault be known
 To the Venetian state. Come, bring him away.

1. **Cunning:** known, conceivable or imaginable. 2 **Hold him long:** yet keep him alive for a long time. 3. **Till that:** such time that

Othello's last words before he kills himself.



"Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice;
But speak of me as I am,—of one that loved
Not wisely but too well....."

(Pic: 68.)

OTHELLO'S LAST WORDS, BEFORE HE KILLS HIMSELF.

OTH: Soft you!¹ a word or two before you go.

I have done the State some service, and they know it.
No more of that.²

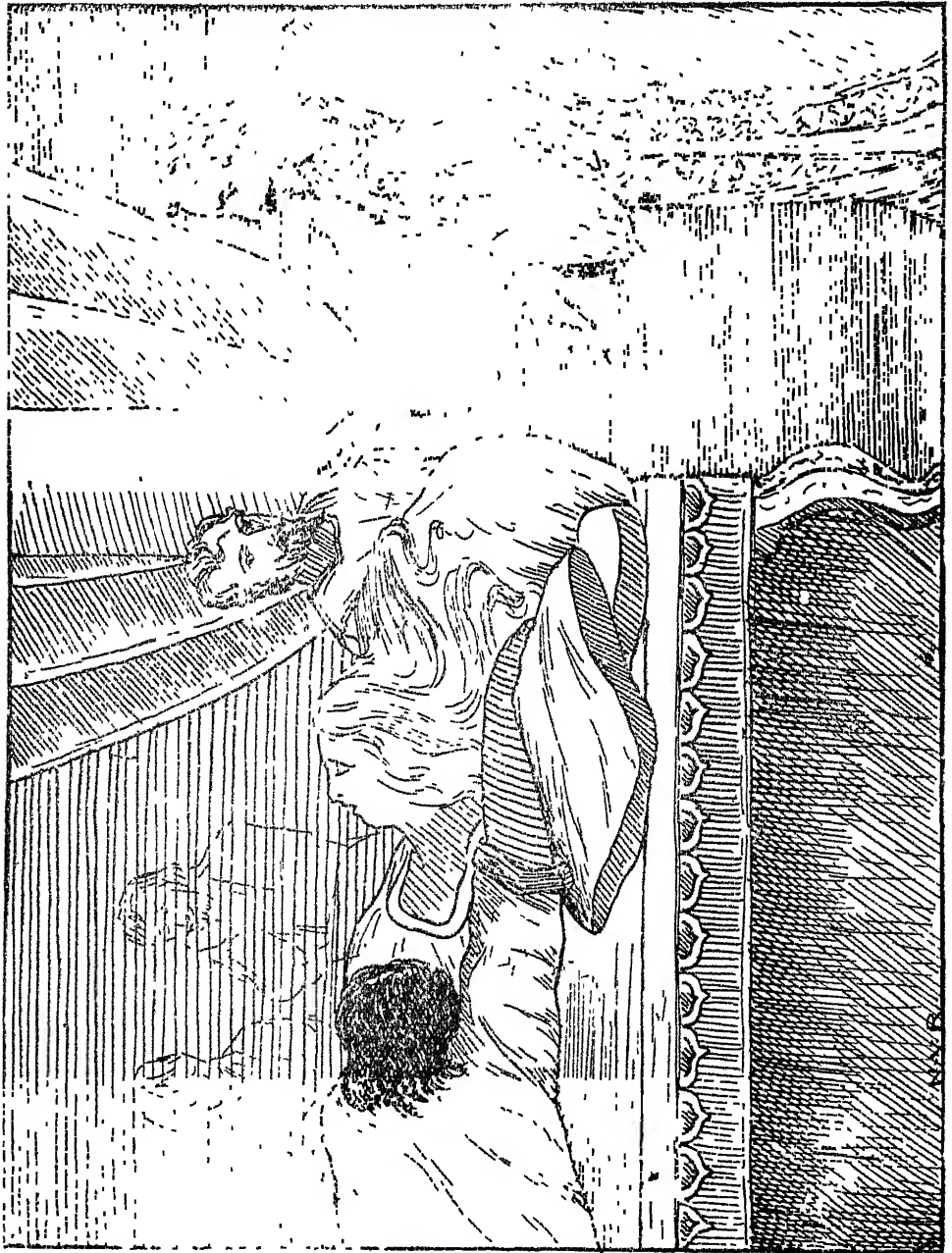
I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am, nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice:³ then,⁴ must you speak
(1) Of one that lov'd, not wisely, but too well,⁵
(2) Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme;⁶ (3) of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away,
Richer than all his tribe,⁷ (4) of one, whose subdu'd eyes
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum.⁸

Set you down this,⁹
And say, besides, that in Aleppo¹⁰ once,
Where a malignant¹¹ and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd¹² the State,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,¹³
And smote him—thus.

[Stabs himself.]

1 Soft you . be patient ; or wait awhile 2 No more of that no more of that (will you have from me), i.e. I shall not speak of it any more 3 Nothing malice : do not (attempt to) cover or belittle (my faults), nor magnify them out of hate and anger 4 Then when you write thus 5 Of one... well 'describe me, as one who loved rather excessively than wisely. 6 Of one ...extreme as one not easily susceptible to jealousy, but, when worked up or excited to it, became extremely confounded (and unhinged) in his mind 7 Of one . . .tribe there are two possible explanations for this 'a 'Indian ' seems to be a misprint for 'Judean,' in which case the allusion is to Herod the King of Judea, who was a tyrannous ruler, and was by nature suspicious. He committed several cruelties and killed even his wife, Marlan, which was like throwing a pearl away. Or, (b) 'Indian ' may refer to the West Indian or the Aborigines of America who did not know the value of pearls and other precious things ; and in consequence are said to have given them away in return for mere trinkets and trifles like glass-beads offered to them by early European traders. 8 Of one . gum (subdued eyes eyes subdued or sobered by the experiences of the world. Albeit although. To the melting mood to a weeping temper. The Arabian . . . gum refers to some trees in Arabia, like the rubber trees, which, when cut, profusely pour down or let out their milky juice which gradually hardens and becomes useful for medicine and other purposes Eyes this is a Synecdoche, where 'the part stands for the whole' Here the word refers to the person i. e. Othello himself) 9 Set . this write in this manner 10 Aleppo a trading town in Syria 11 Malignant : mischievous 12 Traduc'd brought to contempt or disrepute 13 Circumcised dog despicable Turk. (Circumcision a religious ceremony among the Jews and the Mohamadans by which the fore-skins of male children were cut off.)

Lodovico denounces Iago who, as the root cause of the whole tragedy, is reserved for lingering torture.



Beware of the power of the wicked passions of Man which, if not trained aright, do infinite havoc !

(Pic. 64.)

LOD : O bloody period !¹

GRA · All that's spoke is marr'd.²

OTH : I kiss'd thee ere I killed thee ; no way but this,³ [Falling upon Desdemona.]

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.⁴

CAS : This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon ;
For, he was great of heart.

Lodovico's denunciation of Iago Punishment of the latter.

LOD : [To Iago.] O Spartan dog !⁵

More fell⁶ than anguish,⁷ hunger,⁸ or the sea !⁹

Look on the tragic loading of this bed ;¹⁰

This is thy work :—the object poisons¹¹ sight ;

Let it be hid.¹²

[To Gra.] Gratiano, keep the house,

And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,

For, they succeed on you.¹³ [To Cas.] To you, lord governor,

Remains the censure¹⁴ of this hellish villain—

The time, the place, the torture,—O, enforce¹⁵ it !

Myself will straight aboard,¹⁶ and to the State

This heavy act with heavy heart relate

[Exit.

1. Period : end. 2. Allmarr'd · Othello with all his fame has come to this end. That's · that has (been) 3. No way but this : no other way is open to me now than this one ; (i.e. killing etc.) 4 Killingkiss · kill myself and die kissing you 5 Spartan dog : ferocious and obstinate dog of Sparta. 6. Fell . cruel. 7. Anguish agony or suffering. 8. Hunger pangs of hunger. 9. The sea the sea that is unfathomable and insatiable. 10. Tragic.....bed : calamitous burden on this bed ; 11. Poisons sickens. 12. Let... .hid · cover it. 13. Succeed on you · fall to you or belong to you (as the nearest relation, by the Law of Succession.) 14 Censure : punishment. 15. Enforce · carry out. 16. Aboard sail off.

A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF

ACT V.

PART I.

Cassio is waylaid and wounded, and Roderigo killed.

It is past midnight. Cassio has finished his supper in Bianca's house and, as Iago has previously planned, is now returning to his lodging between twelve and one. The night is dark; there is 'no watch'; there is no passer-by. He is alone on the road. Iago and Roderigo are to waylay him to make 'him incapable of Othello's place' by 'knocking out his brains'. Roderigo is to 'stand behind' and to have his 'good rapier bare,' 'so that, as Cassio passes that way, he may at once 'put it home'. In the words of Iago,—

Quick, quick; fear nothing; I'll be at thy elbow;
It makes us, or it mars us; think on that;
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Roderigo, however, has 'no great devotion to the deed'; and yet, because Iago 'has given him satisfying reasons,' he will do it. After all, this fool lightly thinks 'tis but a man gone'; and it is nothing in view of the immense advantage and profit that he will thereby reap—viz—the long-expected enjoyment of Desdemona. He has only to thrust forth his sword, as he easily takes it, and Cassio immediately 'dies'. Still he is nervous; and therefore 'may miscarry in it'. Hence, he begs of Iago to 'be near at hand,' and the latter promises to do so.

Though Iago is the main plotter, yet he does not do the deed himself. In case there be any failure, he may be discovered and exposed,—an event he always skilfully guards against. Hence, he engages Roderigo for the deed. He also thinks that it is not unlikely that, in that night affray, Roderigo too may get killed. In that case it will be a two-fold gain to him; for, 'if Roderigo live, he calls me to—

A restitution large
Of gold and jewels that I bobbed from him,
As gifts to Desdemona; it must not be'.

As for Cassio, it is very necessary that he too must die; for as Iago fears,—

If Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly; and besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him; there stand I in much peril:
No, he must die. Be't. so. I hear him coming.

Though Cassio was dismissed from the post of Lieutenant which was the main cause of Iago's Envy against him, yet such

is the corrupting influence of that passion that he pursues the object of his hate to the very last degree. If one cause of hatred is satisfied and removed, another, tho' a fancied one, quickly takes its place. So, his suspicion of Cassio's supposed misconduct with his wife, Emilia, becomes another motive for his malice against him; and now there comes this additional reason that 'he (Cassio) has a daily beauty in his life, that makes me ugly.' Cassio must die and Roderigo too. But the affray must be only between them, as he says,—

Now, whether he kills Cassio.
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain.

Cassio passes that way unsuspectingly. Recognising him by 'his gait,' Roderigo thrusts his sword at him. However, as Cassio puts it,—

That thrust had been my enemy indeed,
But that my coat (of mail) is better than thou know'st.

Cassio retaliates with his weapon, and the unprotected Roderigo falls down seriously wounded. But Iago's object is not fully achieved. Cassio is still safe; and, knowing that he is protected by a coat of mail, Iago stealthily wounds him from behind in his leg and runs away. Thus, in time of need, he deserts Roderigo whose money he has very often taken; thus, also, he maims Cassio for ever, though the latter has all along considered and treated him as 'my friend, honest, honest Iago.'

Othello, who happens to be at a distance and alone, hears and recognises 'the voice of Cassio crying for help.' He concludes that he has been fatally wounded and that he will not survive. He takes him to be practically dead and so is fully satisfied in his vengeance against him. He is pleased to see that 'Iago keeps his word.' He thinks of him with gratitude,—

O brave Iago, honest and just,
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong'

Othell does not yet know that his 'honest and just friend' is the blackest villain who, in perpetrating such deeds, is actuated, not by 'such noble sense of his friend's wrong,' but by his own plans and purposes of a wicked, low, mean and self-seeking nature. The once 'noble, free and open Moor' has thus allowed himself to be 'led on by the nose as asses are,' and in the hands of a clever rogue, has now become a fool and maniac crying, as he thinks on just grounds, for nothing short of blood. He thirsts after the savage pleasure of nothing less than the certain death of the supposed seducer of his wife. And then, by association of ideas, he immediately turns his thoughts from the seducer to the seduced,—to Desdemona, and furiously mutters to himself,—

Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your unbless'd fate hies; strumpet, I come!

He then makes this dark and fearful resolution that,
Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.

The groans and cries of the wounded (Cassio and Roderigo) attract the attention of Lodovico and Gratiano. Seeing that 'the cry is direful,' they infer that 'tis some mischance.' They however, fear to venture out; for, after all,—

These may be counterfeits: let's think it unsafe
To come into the cry without more help.

But Iago appears on the spot with light and weapons and, as if coming in haste just straight from his bed, he is dressed 'in his shirt.' Lodovico and Gratiano recognise him and speak praisingly of him between themselves. Gratiano says,—

This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

And Lodovico also joins saying,—

The same indeed: a very valiant fellow.

The villain Iago, as if not recognising Lodovico and Gratiano and feigning mental agitation at the cry of 'murder' hastens to the spot and enquires of Cassio—

What are you, here, that cry so grievously?

When poor Cassio begs for help, out comes the exclamation of the hypocrite,—

O me, Lieutenant, what villains have done this?

On Cassio expressing a suspicion that the murderer is somewhere 'hereabout,' Iago makes a show of shouting to Lodovico for help and, going out, hears Roderigo crying for help and sees him lying wounded. He pretends to take him for the murderer referred to by Cassio and stabs him. Roderigo dies, cursing his treacherous murderer,—

O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!

But Iago feels no remorse, 'no prickings of conscience for having killed poor Roderigo. Such is the sad fate of this honest, trustful, well-meaning but infatuated and gullible simpleton. He pays dearly with his life for his unholy alliance with the devil, (Iago) in attempting to seduce a chaste woman.

Having done this murder and feigning ignorance of the presence, near at hand, of Lodovico and Gratiano, Iago cries out—

How silent is this town! Ho! murder! murder!
Are you of good or evil?

And, when Lodovico answers 'as you shall prove us, praise us,' he keeps up the pretence of not knowing them till then, when, in all sincerity, he apologises to them and begs,—'I cry you mercy.'

PART II.

Iago's villainy has been so far successful.

As for Iago, the clever rogue, his cunning rascality has so far triumphed. But will it be thus for ever ?

Is Right to be for ever on the scaffold ?

And Wrong to be for ever on the throne ?

So far, the Question has only an affirmative answer. Thus has Iago fulfilled the promises he has time and again made to his friend Roderigo ; thus has he satisfied the eager hopes he has all along raised in him. In this way, he now repays the money he has so frequently fleeced from him with the bait of helping him ; and in this way, he now returns the jewels he has taken from him as the intended gifts to Desdemona. He is the very embodiment of the worst Ingratitude, the basest Treachery and Duplicity, without a particle of shame, remorse or conscience. To him, friends are so, only so long as they can serve his purposes ; to him, 'Love, Honesty, Friendship and Faith,' are empty words which raise no surging sentiments of sacred obligations. Thus has he so far successfully saved himself from the risk of exposure to Desdemona, and from the necessity of 'restitution large of gold and jewels,' either of which Roderigo threatened to put into execution, and would in all probability have done so, if left alive.

Iago's base and self-seeking instincts and propensities are satisfied, but not wholly. Cassio is still alive, and there is still the possibility in Iago's mind that—

The Moor may unfold me to him.

He cannot kill him out-right as he has done Roderigo ; for, besides being protected by a special armour, he (Cassio) is better known than Roderigo to Lodovico and Gratiano who are on the scene. What therefore, he cannot do by murder, he now desires to accomplish by pretences of honest friendship and loving service. He wishes to evade the possibility of his being suspected and, therefore, cries aloud for assistance. He asks Lodovico and Gratiano to help him in attending on Cassio. He appears to feel deeply concerned and interested in his welfare ; he therefore requests them to hold the light, to lend him a garter or to fetch him a chair. He even offers to bind Cassio's wound with his own shirt ; he eagerly begs of them to convey him thence at once, while he himself will run up to fetch 'the General's surgeon.'

PART III.

Iago tries to incriminate poor Bianca too.

Attracted by the commotion, Bianca comes up to the place ; and, finding that Cassio, her lover, is seriously wounded, she is

deeply touched with pity, sorrow and fear. She looks vacant, turns pale, trembles all over her body, and weeps. Her presence suggests a probable plea to the inventive genius of Iago, and, shamelessly, without compunction or fear of perjury, he straight-away palms the blame on her for the affray and its consequences by saying,—

Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.

Her frightened looks and paleness of color, he ascribes to deliberate pretence on her part, and threatens her,—

Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.

Turning to others, he remarks,—

Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her;
Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

With the help of his light, he appears to discover, as if in surprise, that the man he took for a robber and stabbed to death, is unfortunately 'my friend and my dear countryman, Roderigo'. Though Cassio denies all knowledge of him and assures Iago that between him and Roderigo there was no malice whatever, yet Iago cleverly urges that—

This is the fruit of whoring.

Bianca is a 'mistress,' a 'strumpet' and they must have quarrelled with each other for her. He elicits from her the information that Cassio supped that night at her house, and he takes it as evidence enough to confirm his suspicion. He therefore accuses her of abetment of murder, and commands her to go with him. 'Come, mistress,' he orders, 'you must tell's another tale.'

PART IV.

Iago sends Emilia to the citadel to inform Othello.

In the meantime, Emilia comes upon the scene, and eagerly enquires,—

Alas, what's the matter? What's the matter, husband?

The villain answers,

Cassio hath here been set on in the dark
By Roderigo and fellows that are 'scaped;
He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Othello, as the Governor of the place, must be immediately informed of the happenings. Iago, as if in duty bound, straight-away despatches his wife to the citadel,—

Emilia, run you to the Citadel,
And tell my lord and lady what hath happ'd!

Thus, by seeming friendship and voluntary service, and by shifting the blame on to other shoulders, does this villain Iago try

to escape from the bloody deed of which he himself is the plotter and perpetrator. He seems to be rather anxious about himself; for, in his own words,—

This is the night that either makes me or fordoes me quite.

Hence, he must do everything that his inventive intellect and art can suggest to save his skin.

We thus see this villain, Iago putting us in possession of the mystery by his confessions in soliloquies at sufficient intervals.

PART V.

Othello, in the Bed-Chamber before the murder. Desdemona fast asleep!

From the scene of murder, Othello returns to the Castle, and enters the bed-chamber. A deadly silence prevails there and things are immersed in a semi-sombre darkness. Desdemona is all alone and is fast asleep on her bed. A single taper is burning low, and it adds to the ominousness of the scene by the shadows it casts. Othello is now full of revenge and has come fully resolved to take out Desdemona's life.

He is now inside Desdemona's bed-chamber, at the threshold of a brutal crime. In the dead of night, beneath a starry sky, in a lonely bed-room, with a light burning dim, beside a figure of ravishing beauty, Othello stands, thinks, argues to himself,—thus giving us a full and free revelation of his mind and character. His thoughts, emotions, reasons, scruples and answers, reflect, as in a mirror, the whole of his nature.

He tries to justify his cruel resolve. More than for himself, he thinks he is bound in duty and honour, as an integral part of Society, to remove the dangerous menace from its path. He takes upon himself the *role* of the champion of Chastity or the vindicator of woman's virtue. He appears to hear the peremptory call of the stern Justice within. To him, where Justice is concerned personal leanings should have no place.

Though he is yet in the clutches of the consuming passion which has almost made him a monomaniac full of revenge, he is bitterly conscious of the magnitude of the deed he is about to commit. His vengeance, however, is of no mean character, and is for no vulgar ends. Despite his imperfections, there is, according to certain critics, a nobility in his revenge. But the word 'nobility' is decidedly a misnomer in this connection. There is nothing noble in the idea or act of revenge from a high standard of morality,—absolutely nothing when that revenge is cruel, brutal, self-justified, and self-inflicted. The utmost, therefore, that can be said is that, judged by the ethical standard prevailing at that time, he is just in his revenge. His appreciation of Desdemona's angelic beauty is in no way less now than on his

wedding day ; and his love for her is still as ardent, pure and sublime as it was when, in Brabantio's house, despite disparity in age, rank, color and custom, they agreed upon their secret marriage. According to him, her breath is still 'balmy' and 'sweet.' Her skin even now is whiter than snow and is as 'smooth as monumental alabaster' In his view, she is the 'cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,' and as later he expresses himself to Emilia,—

If Heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it.

His love for her is so unbounded and real that all the riches of the world cannot tempt him to part with her ; and though, as he once put it to Iago, 'she might lie by an emperors's side and command him tasks,' yet, even for the exchange of that imperial authority and dignity, he would not give her up. Even now, though resolved to take her life, it is abhorrent to him to shed her blood. In his own words,—

I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow.

He knows full well that the light of her life is unlike the light of the burning taper, and he explains himself by apostrophising the two lights—

Addressing himself first to the taper light, he says,—

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore,
Should I repent me.

But about the other light,—Desdemona's life,—he says that he cannot give it back, if once he puts it out. As he says—

But once put out thy light,—
Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature !—
I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume.

And again, he compares her to a rose flower and says,—

When I have pluck'd the rose,
I cannot give it vital growth again !
It must needs wither :

In sight of her, he is almost enraptured by her lovely form, as she is lying in her bed asleep. Her beauty in repose is so striking that he cannot restrain himself from contemplating it to his heart's content. To him, her breath is so balmy that it doth 'almost persuade Justice to break her sword.' He is therefore tempted, before he plucks the rose and makes it inevitably wither, to 'smell it on the tree.' Hence, he kisses and kisses her again until he has deliberately to check himself with 'one more, and this the last.' He is even touched to tears at the thought of her nearing end ; as he puts it, 'I must weep.'

Still, despite his unending love and affection, his sorrow must strike 'where it doth love' and she must die. His sorrow is 'heavenly' and his tears, though affectionate, are yet 'cruel'. He is certain that if she is allowed to live, 'she'll betray more men'; and hence, in his judgment, her death is a moral necessity and is unavoidable. Her guilt, according to him, is so abominable that he would not even mention it by its name. In the imminence of Death, which he is prepared to deal out to her with his own hands, he feels a certain solemnity and sacredness in his self-imposed task. He is struck with an awe that, he thinks, is holy and righteous; and he even believes that the deed which he is ready to perpetrate is more of the nature of a holy 'sacrifice' on the altar of Virtue and Justice than a cruel 'murder' done in fiendish satisfaction of a bloody vengeance. He abhors to give open utterance to her guilt which is so foul that, like a poisonous 'weed,' it 'aches the senses'. He fears that by such an utterance, he will offend himself and offend the surrounding Nature too. The reason or the motive for his intended act is, as he exclaims—

It is the Cause, it is the Cause, my soul;
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!
It is the Cause.

And that Cause—the Cause of Chastity and Honor—is of so ennobled a character that everything else sinks into insignificance before it. Its demands are so exacting, and its ends so compelling, that personal love and affection dwarf into nothing before its lofty and towering stature. If that cause is to be vindicated, it must engulf all smaller motives and meaner ends. So imperative is its call that Othello cannot avoid answering it; and, in doing so, he must overlook his own love for his wife; nay, sacrifice her to meet its demands.

PART VI.

Desdemona wakes up and protests but in vain.

At this moment, Desdemona wakes up and asks 'who's there? Othello?' 'Ay, Desdemona!' he replies. Entirely ignorant of the motive that actuates him and the purpose that has brought him there, she invites him to bed. But, 'have you pray'd to night?' he questions her. Not knowing the significance of that question, she answers 'Yes.' 'If you bethink yourself of any crime,' he proceeds,—

Unreconciled as yet to Heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

She is still unable to grasp his meaning and asks like a child, 'What may you mean by that?' Othello cannot brook such questionings, as the execution of his purpose cannot be delayed. He commands her, therefore,—

Well, do it, and be brief,
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit...
I would not kill thy soul.

These words of his horrify her ; and, in extreme fear, she asks him, 'Talk you of killing?' 'Ay, I do!' answers Othello curtly. She realises that he is determined, and hence she feels helpless. 'Then, Heaven have mercy on me!' she resignedly utters. 'Amen, with all my heart!'—he wishes and confirms her desire. Othello is under the impression that Desdemona craves for Heaven's mercy to save her from her sins; while, in reality, she begs God to save her from being killed by her husband. When therefore the latter says 'Amen, with all my heart!' she takes him to mean that he consents to her request and will not kill her. Hence, with a childlike feeling of joyful relief, she hastily speaks, 'if you say so, I hope you will not kill me'

Othello gets irritated by what he thinks her obstructive evasion. He therefore expresses his unshakable determination,—denying her request,—by a single, angry and terrific mutter 'Hum!' His eyes 'roll' he gnaws 'his nether lip'; and his 'very frame shakes under some bloody passion' These symptoms, in the words of Desdemona are 'fatal,' and are 'portents,' of a terrible calamity. She therefore becomes mortally afraid of him; and yet, in her childishness, she sincerely hopes that 'they do not point on me;' for, 'guiltiness, I know not.'

Othello, who is convinced that she has been untrue to him, takes the assertion of her innocence as a pretence, and says, 'Think on thy sins.' But Desdemona, who has not known or committed any sin against him, and who has loved him and still loves him deeply, readily answers,—'They are loves I bear to you.' But Othello who believes her love to be false, now retorts, 'nay, and for that thou diest.' She, however, who has been all along sincere to him, cannot understand the logic of his conclusion. 'That death's unnatural that kills for loving,' she replies. 'Keep silent,' he checks her, 'Peace and be still.' 'I will so,' she obeys; but, 'what is the matter?' she begs of him, to know the real cause of his anger.

He replies in all the intensity of his consuming Jealousy,—

That handkerchief which I so loved and gave thee
Thou gavest to Cassio.

She emphatically denies the charge,—

No, by my life and soul!

She protests that it should be proved, and hence she asks, 'send for the man, and ask him.' He, however, takes her to be obstinate in hiding the truth still, and hence warns her,—

Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed,

She thinks this to be a mere threat on his part to extort a false confession from her ; and therefore she still protests that she is 'not yet to die ;' and that, if Cassio is sent for, she will yet establish her innocence. She says,—

I never did
Offend you in my life ; never loved Cassio
But with such general warranty of Heaven,
As I might love ; I never gave him token.

Othello would not move , on the other hand, he becomes harsher and harder than ever and says,—

Therefore, confess thee freely of thy sin ;
For, to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal... ..
By Heaven, I saw my handkerchief in's hand.
O perjured woman ! thou dost stone my heart,
And makest me call what I intend to do
'A murder,' which I thought a sacrifice.
I saw the handkerchief.

She protests emphatically,—

He found it then ;
I never gave it him. Send for him hither.

And in her offended dignity and virtue she humbly but firmly demands, 'send for him hither ;' 'let him confess a truth.' 'He hath confess'd,' replies Othello, rather triumphantly and jeeringly. 'What, my lord ?', asks that unjustly suspected lady 'That he hath used thee,' retorts her husband. 'How, unlawfully ?' she hastily and eagerly questions. 'Ay,' confirms Othello. 'He will not say so,' she again protests, 'if he is asked about it.' 'Certainly,' says Othello in a savage tone, 'he will not say so because his mouth is stopped. 'What, is he dead?', questions Desdemona, in fear and anxiety. The now savage and vengeful man replies—

Had all his hairs been lives, my great Revonge
Had stomach for them all.

Desdemona now feels helpless. Her personal explanations and assertions of innocence and purity convey no conviction to him ; and the only other witness that can prove her purity is now no more. So, when Othello tells her that Cassio is killed,—dead and gone, she sighs for the poor man and exclaims—

Alas, he is betrayed ! and I am undone !

Filled with the thought of her present plight, she is overcome with grief and begins to weep. Othello misunderstands her feelings, and takes her to weep for Cassio, her illicit lover. 'Out, strumpet,' he pitilessly roars, and threateningly asks, 'Weep'st thou for him to my face ?'

Desdemona now knows that her protestations and declarations of innocence will be of no avail. Hence, she appeals to his human sympathy, and pathetically begs.—‘O. banish me, my lord, but kill me not!’ ‘Down, strumpet,’ stamps Othello with his foot, and indicates his strong determination. At least, ‘let me live to-night,’ she piteously requests. ‘Nay, if you strive,’ he menaces her with his iron fist. ‘But half an hour,’ she again remonstrates. ‘Being done, there is no pause,’ he resolutely replies. ‘But while I say one prayer,’ she finally requests. ‘No’, determinately he refuses, saying—

It is too late.

With this, he executes the tragic deed, goaded by his passion of jealousy. With his own hands, he smothers her to death. A few moments later, seeing her ‘not yet quite dead,’ he smothers her again and again until he believes her to be completely dead. ‘So, so’, he repeats his smothering action, for, ‘I that am cruel, am yet merciful,’ for, ‘I would not have thee linger in thy pain.’

The whole of this scene between the husband and wife is so pitiful, painful, and excruciating that we feel as if our hearts would break. As Warburton says,—

I am glad that I have ended my revival of this dreadful scene—
It is not to be endured.

PART VII.

Othello's confusion after the Murder.

Emilia, who was dispatched by her husband to report to Othello the occurrences of the night in another place, hastily runs up to the Citadel, and, reaching the bed-chamber, hurriedly knocks at the door, calling Othello aloud.

Othello has just done with his threats and scoldings to Desdemona, and is now smothering her to death. She is still lingering, and his work is not yet finished. Just then Emilia knocks. Othello is taken aback and gets alarmed. ‘Who is there?’ he tremblingly asks and fears to open the door. He is afraid that Desdemona might recover and report to her (Emilia) his attempt on her life. Emilia, however, continues knocking. He therefore hurries up the strangling of his wife; and, when satisfied that there is no more sign of life, he proceeds to the door to open it.

He, however, thinks it possible that, if Emilia is admitted into the room, ‘she’ll sure speak to my wife’. Convinced as he is that the deed he has just perpetrated is, according to him, justifiable on moral grounds, he has yet a vague feeling that it may be construed as a crime. In his heart, he feels himself guilty and, like an ordinary felon fearing exposure, tries to conceal the victim of his bloody deed. So, before he lets Emilia in, he draws the curtain of Desdemona’s bed, so as to hide the dead body of his wife.

But, 'Wife!' 'Wife!' 'What wife?' mutters Othello to himself. Why should he think of his wife now? By his own deed, she is no more. 'What wife? I have no wife?' he feels, and thus, in addition to a sense of guiltiness, he is also overcome by remorse and sorrow.

Between such swiftly alternating emotions and thoughts, he is suddenly seized by a vague feeling of total emptiness. The one impelling motive of his miserable life is now gone and the one important deed, which his tortured mind has been longing after is now finished. For days together, he was in the grip of a terrible passion that, in its virulence, swallowed up all other thoughts and dominated his mind. It became, as it were, the ruling passion of his later life; and now, with the death of Desdemona, it has reached its desired end. The poison has emptied itself of all its strength and virulence. In its place, no other motive comes to succeed, no other objective appears in sight. His life seems to have reached its end as it were, and therefore, though still alive, he feels himself to be immersed into a desolate vacancy and a death-like gloom. He feels plunged into the depths of a deep chasm following a terrific earthquake. He describes his position as 'insupportable!', and continues,—

O heavy hour!

Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon, and the affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.

In this mood, he forgets himself and forgets his surroundings. He stands stupefied, and only the loud knockings of Emilia bring him back to his senses.

PART VIII.

Emilia is admitted into the room and startling revelations are made to her.

He now slowly recollects her presence outside and says,—
'I had forgot thee, O come in, Emilia.' He opens the door and lets her in. 'O my good lord,'—she reports hastily, in between her heavy breaths,—'yonder's foul murders done!' 'What, now?' he hurriedly questions her, as if ignorant of the fact. 'Yes, but now, my lord' she answers. Then, half-listlessly and half-philosophically, like a cold, unconcerned judge and moraliser of human conduct, who is ignorant of the actual happenings of the world, he speaks,

It is the very error of the Moon:—

She comes more near the earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.

The worldly Emilia, however, to whom philosophical pronouncements do not appeal, proceeds straight to the details of that night's incidents,—'Cassio, my lord, has kill'd a young Venetian

call'd Roderigo.' Othello, who is convinced that it was Cassio whose dying groans he had heard and who must have died by this time, is now taken aback and ejaculates, 'Roderigo killed!', and hastily enquires if Cassio is also kill'd. 'No, Cassio is not kill'd' replies Emilia. 'Not Cassio kill'd!' he almost madly echoes her words and, in all the reviving fury of a defeated yet unspent vengeance, cries out bitterly—

Then, murder's out of tune
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Desdemona, who now partially and momentarily recovers from suffocation, dimly grasps the conversation between her husband and Emilia and, in a low dying voice, mutters, 'O, falsely, falsely murder'd!' in reference to Cassio who, she still thinks, is dead. Emilia hears the voice of Desdemona. It seems to be strangely unlike her usual voice; in fact, it appears to be like that of one in the throes of some mortal distress. She is seized with fear and, in her wordly shrewdness, quickly remembers the rather strained relations that have lately existed between Othello and his lady. She recollects his horrid suspicions about his wife's Chastity, and the vague but vile words and abuses he hurled at her. Hence she infers that, in the nightly loneliness of the bed-chamber, he, in an angry fit of Jealousy, must have violently dealt with her. Hence, to make herself sure of the truth of her conclusion, she eagerly and hurriedly questions, 'Alas, what cry is that?' Othello, what with his attempt to evade answering her, what with his effort to pretend ignorance of the fact, and partly through his inability to formulate a ready reply, but mostly owing to the troubled and confounded state of his mind which is now somewhat overcome by a sense of guiltiness and fear of exposure, merely echoes her last word, 'That!' followed by a vague interrogation, 'What?'. Emilia, whose suspicion is now fully roused, boldly declares 'that was my lady's voice,' and, thrusting him aside, approaches Desdemona. Fearing that some fatal calamity has befallen her lady, she even cries aloud for help, and, turning to the motionless form, almost weepingly addresses it,

O lady, speak again! Sweet Desdemona!
O sweet mistress, speak!

'A guiltless death I die,' replies Desdemona slowly, while gasping for breath. Emilia is horrified, and questions, 'O, who hath done this deed?' Even in her last moment, Desdemona's fondness and love for her husband are so great that she cannot think ill of him. She does not like him to suffer the consequences of a murderous deed, and so she takes the blame on herself and says, 'Nobody; I myself.' As her life is flickering out, she even desires Emilia to convey her reverence and affection to her lord. 'Commend me to my lord,' she slowly articulates her words and, bidding 'farewell' to Emilia, breathes her last.

PART IX.

Emilia's spirited denunciation.

Then ensues a crisp and cutting conversation between Emilia and Othello. It gradually gathers volume and violence, and assumes the form of a series of sharp questions and virulent abuses on the part of the woman, and faint attempts at replies, blurring out of suspicions, and finally a threat on her life, on the part of the man. At first Othello, contrary to his natural truthfulness, tries to hide his fault, by making it appear that Desdemona committed suicide. In corroboration of his statement, he refers to the last words of Desdemona herself 'Nobody, I myself,' in answer to Emilia's question '—O, who hath done this deed!' Then turning to Emilia, he says,

You heard her say herself it was not I
That committed the deed.

But Emilia, who has fully known his previous conduct towards his wife and his treatment of her latterly has a different opinion of him. In her wordly experience, knowing to what extent Jealousy can go, she does not and will not conclusively rely on Desdemona's dying declaration, and will not therefore believe in Othello's freedom from guilt. 'She said so,' rejoins Emilia, 'but I cannot rely on it,—

I must needs report the truth (to others.)'

Reverting to his natural repulsion to utter a falsehood or to keep it up by other falsehoods, he now readily confesses, 'twas I that kill'd her', but immediately follows with a curse against her (Desdemona) for, what he thinks, her calculated perjury even in her last moment,—

She's like a liar gone to burning hell!

Emilia certainly has her own petty follies and faults, her pardonable prejudices and prattling habits, nay even her occasional reprehensible slips or lapses from truth, to satisfy the whim or serve the interest of her husband. Such foibles, prejudices and lapses are, however, common to humanity. But she is certainly far from being a cold, calculating villain or a deliberate sinner. Beneath her wordly wisdom and shrewd common-sense, there runs a vein of courage, and independence, and an ennobling sympathy. In the presence of Death, that composes all differences and submerges all vulgarities, she feels her innate candour and nobility surging up in her breast, and so, in a fearless tone of righteous anger, she makes a well-merited retort to Othello's curse,—

The more angel she, and you the blacker devil.

And, to all his false charges, she but readily answers, refuting them angrily—

OTH : She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

EMIL : Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

OTH : She was false as water.

EMIL : Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false. O, she was heavenly true!

Othello then proceeds to give details and justify his action,—

Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.

Or, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,

But that I did proceed upon just grounds

To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

Thus, he begins and ends his justification by citing 'Iago the honest,' as his witness.

PART X.

Emilia staggered to learn of Iago's part in the murder.

Emilia is rather amazed and staggered to learn that her husband whom, excepting for his occasional waywardness, she sincerely believed to be honest and sympathetic, should have been privy to such a murder. And so, she wonderingly questions 'My husband?'—'Thy husband' affirms Othello. 'That she was false to wedlock?' enquires Emilia, 'Ay, with Cassio,' adds Othello. 'My husband?' she again asks. He replies,—

Ay, 'twas he that told me first:

And I have full trust in what he said, for,

An honest man he is, and hates the slime

That sticks on filthy deeds.

Still Emilia cannot believe that her husband could have made such a villainous, false charge against Desdemona, leading to her murder; and so she once more asks, 'My husband?' Othello, who now loses patience with her for her inability to understand the simple word 'husband,' rather angrily replies,—

What needs this iteration, woman?.....

I say, thy husband: dost understand the word?

My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Othello's persistent and emphatic repetition of her husband's knowledge of the affair, and his implicit belief in the truth of it lead the hitherto doubting Emilia to believe in Iago's complicity in this hellish deed as most probable. In that case, her husband has deliberately played false and exploited the Moor's open, confiding and trustful nature, and committed the blackest perjury, fraud and villainy when, in secret, he (Iago) must have portrayed Desdemona to him as unchaste. Even long before this catastrophe, when she saw Othello behaving rather harshly and strangely towards his wife, she very shrewdly inferred, and even often repeated her inference, that,—'The Moor's abused by some most

villainous knave, some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.' And now, to her great amazement and utter disgust, the revelation gradually dawns that such a villainous knave is none other than her own husband. Addressing her dead lady, she gives this bitter expression to her horror-struck sentiments,—

O mistress! (you have been falsely betrayed)
 'Villainy hath made mocks with love;'
 And the horror of it is, it was my husband
 Who said that you were false.

Emilia is now almost filled with the utmost loathing against her husband, in the light of the truth now revealed by Othello in all its naked horror. She can hardly restrain her feelings. She therefore openly comes out with this curse on Iago,—

If he (Iago) say so, may his pernicious soul
 Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart.

Othello is rather surprised and enraged. This woman, not only disbelieves what he says but even openly condemns his friend in whose integrity he has every confidence. In fact, his trust in Iago is so great, and his opinion of his honesty is so deeply established, that he has come to identify Iago with Truth and Honesty. And, as for this woman, he has already expressed his opinion that she is 'a subtle whore, a closet lock-and-key of villainous' secrets,' being an accomplice to his wife in her adulterous crimes. And, therefore, when after having cursed Iago, she turns to Othello and calls him a 'filthy bargain' in reference to his wife, and says—

O, she was too fond of her most filthy bargain,

Othello, like an infuriated animal, roars out 'Ha!', and rushes at Emilia to punish her. But she is too quick for him and balks him. She however persists in emphasizing her point,—

Do thy worst:
 This deed of thine is no more worthy Heaven
 Than thou wast worthy her.

'Peace, you were best,'—he threatens her; but, unmoved by his frightful words or furious deeds, she burst forth into a volley of indignant and abusive terms,

O gull! O dolt! As ignorant as dirt!
 O, thou hast done a deed;
 I care not for thy sword.

No longer respecting him as a General, she threatens to expose him to the public as a murderous criminal—'I'll make thee known, though I lost twenty lives,' And, to show that she is earnest in what she says, she at once cries aloud for help,—

Help! Help, ho! help!
 The Moor has kill'd my mistress! Murder! Murder!

PART XI.

Emilia's cries bring Iago and others to the scene.

Montano, Gratiano, Iago and others, who are already on their way to the Citadel, now hasten to it on hearing Emilia's cries for help. Every one, already agitated over the fatal happenings in another place, is anxious to know what has happened here. 'How now, General?' questions Montano eagerly; and 'What is the matter?' quickly follows Gratiano. Before Othello can answer, Emilia, seeing her husband in the company, tackles him straightaway. She is anxious that he should clear himself from all responsibility for the crime which, she thinks, Othello tries to throw on him. Accordingly, she says,—

O, are you come, Iago? You have done well,
That men must lay their murders on your neck!

Then, pointing to Othello, she continues,—

Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man;
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false:
I know thou didst not, (for) thou art not such a villain.

Saying this, she hopefully anticipates an emphatic denial of the charge against him, and so she earnestly begs him to—

Speak, for my heart is full

But Iago, the deliberate villain and practised plotter, remains unmoved. Without expressing any sense of guilt or fear of exposure and punishment, that felon, in a calm, callous manner which a cold and evil genius alone is capable of, gives out his reply hedged round with double meaning,—

I told him what I thought; and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.

To make matters more explicit, however, Emilia questions him again,—

But did you ever tell him she was false?... ..
False with Cassio?

Iago shamelessly answers 'I did.' Upon this, she bursts out in wrath,—

You told a lie, an odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie!

Emilia is now totally disillusioned, deeply humiliated, and distressed. Her husband, whom she had thought to be innocent, and whom she had expected to clear himself honourably from guilt, is now discovered to be privy to the murder.

In answer to Iago's sharp rebuke to her, 'Go to, charm your tongue,' comes her bold and fearless reply,—

I will not charm my tongue: I am bound to speak;
My mistress here lies murder'd in her bed,
And your reports have set the murder on.

At this reference to Desdemona's murder, every one is horrified and stricken with sorrow : 'Tis a strange truth,'—utters Gratiano ; 'O Monstrous act !'—cries Montano ; and 'O Heavens forbend !'—all heave sorrowfully.

PART XII.

Emilia is smitten with Remorse over the Handkerchief incident.

Iago is becoming anxious and agitated. His wife may give out the truth about the incident of the handkerchief, and *that* may go against him. Hence, as she raves like a mad woman, crying,—

Villainy ! villainy !

I think upon 't : I think : I smell't : O villainy !

Iago tries to check and command her,—

I charge you, get you home.

That woman, however, will not charm her tongue. Given as she is, at times, to levity of talk and lightness of behaviour ; and used, without qualms of conscience, to practising petty faults and small trickeries ; she is not a wicked woman at heart. Compared to her husband in his devilry and wickedness, she is an angel. And now that events have reached this horrible climax, and now that the essential truth has been discovered, she can no longer quiet her conscience and evade its secret prickings. It is true that she thievishly picked up the handkerchief of her mistress and gave it to her husband. She was all along aware that Othello's jealousy against Desdemona was based upon its loss, but she never dreamt that that jealousy would lead to such a catastrophe. She never informed her lady about it. She even openly denied all knowledge of it when questioned. If only she had given out the truth at an earlier stage, Desdemona would have produced the handkerchief before her suspecting husband, and this calamity would probably have been averted. In this way it is, that even the Good at times becomes the unconscious ally of the Evil. Emilia now realises these facts and blames herself for her part in the events that have now ended in her mistress' murder. Struck with repentance, she exclaims in grief,—

I thought so then : I'll kill myself for grief

As Dr Johnson pithily puts it,—“The virtue of Emilia is such as we often find (in this world), worn loosely but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villainies.” She now understands the purpose for which her husband had often induced her to steal *that* handkerchief. She therefore decides to atone for her fault and appease her conscience by an open confession of her thoughtless part in the tragedy. Hence, when her husband commands her to go home,

and though she knows that he might even use force against her, she begs those that are present to hear her,—

Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak ;
'Tis proper I obey him, but not now.

She even fears that, if she gave out the truth, her husband, whom she has now discovered to be a deep villain, may not hesitate to kill her. Hence, she gives utterance to her presentiment,—

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Those that are present are not able to grasp the significance of this passage. They have only so far understood that Iago supplied Othello with some information, on the supposed, correctness of which the latter has killed his wife.

PART XIII

Othello explains how the Handkerchief has inflamed him.

The incident of the handkerchief is not yet revealed and explained, and hence no one suspects Iago as yet. So, every one turns to Othello for elucidation. He begins to explain,—

Nay, stare not, masters. It is true indeed !

* * *

These hands have newly stopp'd her breath
I know this act shows horrible and grim.

But he continues, by way of justification, 'O, she was foul!', and, to support his accusation, he cites Iago as witness, whose honesty no one, except Emilia, as yet doubts. He thus explains the affair,—

'Tis pitiful ; but yet Iago knows
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
A thousand times committed, Cassio confess'd it ;
And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love
Which I first gave her ; I saw it in his hand ;
It was a handkerchief, an antique token,
My father gave my mother.

The incident of the handkerchief is only now for the first time openly mentioned after the murder, and Emilia, already agitated over it in her conscience, is now smitten with the pangs of shame and sorrow. Hence, she ejaculates,—

O Heaven ! O heavenly powers !

And, to prevent her from contradicting and correcting Othello's statement, Iago checks her,—'Come, hold your peace!' But she, burning with penitence, remorse and indignation, cannot hold her peace. 'Twill out, 'twill out,' she cries, and con-

tinues, with all the vehemence and earnestness the occasion demands,—

No, I will speak as liberal as the north.
Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

'Be wise, get you home,' commands her husband again. But Emilia, who has always been true and loyal to her mistress, is now seized with a kind of moral fervour in the presence of Death. So, she boldly refuses obedience to her husband by answering 'I will not obey you now'. She is firmly bent upon disclosing the truth to vindicate her mistress' honor. Seeing that she is determined and obstinate, and failing in his verbal threats to silence her, Iago becomes reckless and attempts to stab her. But Gratiano interposes, crying down Iago for his mean and shameless conduct,—

Fie! your sword upon a woman!

PART XIV.

The Mystery of the Handkerchief is now cleared up.

Saved in time by Gratiano, and convinced that, with any further delay on her part, she might never be able to reveal the truth, she at once comes out with her bold address and clear explanation to the Moor,—

O thou dull Moor! *that* handkerchief thou speak'st of
I found by fortune and did give my husband;
For, often with a solemn earnestness,
More than indeed belong'd to such a trifle,
He begg'd of me to steal it.

'Villainous whore!' bursts out Iago in rage and interrupts her. But she, unmindful of his abuse, continues,—

She gave it Cassio! No, alas, I found it,
And I did give 't my husband.

'Filth, thou liest!' cries out Iago with intent to hush up the truth. But fearlessly and solemnly replies Emilia,—

By Heaven, I do not speak falsely, gentlemen.

Then, turning to Othello, she rebukes him.—

O murderous coxcomb! What should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

PART XV.

Othello, disillusioned, becomes furious, and is imprisoned.

Emilia is stabbed to death.

The mist that had so far dimmed Othello's mind has now cleared away,—the passion that had held him tight in its grip has

now cooled. He sees the truth and realises its horror. In terrible fury, he now turns against Iago. With all the force and ferocity of a mortally-wounded tiger, he springs on the villain to catch and kill him. For the first time, he sees that his honest friend has been the worst of scoundrels.

But Iago is too quick and too clever for him. He evades him by a rapid movement and, as he runs for his life, wreaks his ire on his wife by stabbing her unawares. She falls down. And, as her life is ebbing out, she once more vindicates the chastity and honour of her mistress, gasping out,—

Moor, she was chaste ;
She loved thee, cruel Moor !

And, to emphasize the truth of what she says, she swears,—
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true.

And uttering her last wish and request,—‘ O, lay me by my mistress’ side,’ she breathes her last.

The horrified Gratiano remarks, in reference to Iago,—‘ he’s gone, but his wife’s kill’d.’ Montano also joins in remarking,—‘ ’Tis a notorious villain.’ And, delivering to Gratiano a weapon ‘ just recovered from the Moor,’ and leaving strict instructions to ‘ guard the door without and let him not pass’, Montano goes out to arrest Iago, saying—

I ’m after that same villain,
For, ’tis a damned slave.

Othello is now a close prisoner. He feels so weak, dazed, confounded, and undone, that his sword is easily taken away from him. As he puts it,—

I am not valiant neither,
But every puny whipster gets my sword.
But why should honor outlive honesty ?
Let it go all.

PART XVI.

Othello's remorse, agony and self-reproach.

He is now quite resigned to his approaching end. He does not wish to survive Desdemona whom he has killed from a mistaken sense of honor and duty. He is now deeply penitent, shocked and smitten with grief and remorse over his murderous deed. With his wife gone, unjustly and brutally murdered, he is resolved to end his life by suicide. Not allowed to come forth, in spite of his request to uncle Gratiano, he feels the misery of his confinement. Troubled with a sore heart, shattered nerves, and oppressing thoughts, he now begs of his uncle to come close and speak with him. And when Gratiano comes near and enquires ‘ what is the matter ?’, Othello unburdens himself of his thoughts thus,—

Behold, I have a weapon,—
 A better never did itself sustain
 Upon a soldier's thigh : I have seen the day,
 That with this little arm and this good sword,
 I have made my way through more impediments
 Than twenty times your stop :—but, O vain boast!
 Who can control his fate ?—'Tis not so now.

'Therefore,'—he continues—

Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd ;
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
 And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

* * *

Where should Othello go ?

Othello's thoughts now suddenly turn to his dead wife and he gives full and free vent to his pent-up feelings of sorrow and penitence. Half-choked with tears, he cries,—

O ill-starr'd wench ! How dost thou look now ?
 Pale as thy smock !.....Cold, cold, my gulf !—
 Even like thy chastity.....

Then, though he tries somewhat to control his grief, yet his remorseful and agonized heart is oppressed with this shuddering thought and contingency,—

When we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from Heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it.

No punishment however great or severe, no torture however cruel or constant, he thinks, can ever atone for his rash behaviour and atrocious crime against his wife ; and so he cries out in sore contrition, agony and self-reproach, hurling these curses on himself,—

O cursed slave ! Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this heavenly sight !
 Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire !
 O Desdemon ! dead Desdemon ! dead ! O ! O ! O !

PART XVII.

Iago (as a prisoner), and Cassio (in a chair), are brought in.

In the meantime, Lodovico and Montano return, with Cassio carried in a chair, and Iago as a prisoner. 'Bring the villain forth,' speaks Lodovico, referring to Iago. Filled with extreme disgust, loathing, and nausea at the sight of Iago, Othello takes him to be a veritable devil and looks for his cloven feet, but soon corrects himself, saying—'but that's a fable.' He however knows that he is only a man with a devilish character. So, he says,—

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

Saying this, he instinctively thrusts out his sword to kill him. But he succeeds only in wounding him, as Iago evidently moves aside and escapes with a slight, bleeding wound, chuckling triumphantly—

I bleed, sir, but not killed

Whereupon Othello, on second thought, expresses himself thus,—

I am not sorry neither : I'd have thee live;
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die

Lodovico and others immediately wrench the sword from Othello's hand. Then, Lodovico rather pityingly addresses Othello,—

O thou Othello, that wert once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave,
What shall be said to thee?

A man of honor that he is, Othello does not flinch from admitting his guilt in an open and straight-forward manner. He, therefore, frankly says,—

Why, anything; an honorable murderer, if you will.

And, to show that he is the same good, open and honorable man now as ever, he thus describes the motive of his act,—

Nought did I in hate, but all in honour.

Then come mutual enquiries, proofs and explanations regarding that night's occurrences both in the citadel and elsewhere. Lodovico says with reference to Iago's confession,—‘This wretch hath in part confess'd his villainy.’ But to Othello, he puts this question—‘Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?’ ‘Ay,’ admits Othello. On this, Cassio interposes and asks the Moor for the cause of it, saying, —

Dear General, I never gave you cause.

Othello, in his natural integrity and candour, openly acknowledges his grievous error and begs his pardon,—‘I do believe it; for, I now know that you never gave me cause and, therefore, in all sincerity, I ask your pardon.’ ‘But I regret,’ he continues, ‘that I foolishly allowed myself to be led away by Iago's machinations’ Othello therefore begs of Cassio to question that villain, that demi-devil, about it,—

Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil
Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

PART XVIII

Iago, questioned, remains mum, obstinate and unbending.

That demi-devil, however, was never won't to let others know his wicked purposes. In fact, he never had any saving grace,

nor any single purpose or ideal in life that would profitably engage his fertile brains except it be that of satisfying the baser instincts of his villainous nature. Endowed with the intellect of a Genius, his mind could think of, arrange, and execute, as on a chess-board, multifarious plans, policies and schemes, mostly of a selfish and wicked kind, with marvellous accuracy and precision. But his intellect, gigantic and marvellous as it was, was untempered by any of the ennobling Emotions. Utterly lacking sympathetic imagination, his mind was not in the least open to any such feeling as Pity or Charity. In the absence of such redeeming traits or moderating influences, his intellect,—with all its subtlety, far-sightedness and calculation,—could but follow evil paths and do but evil to others. His intellect being mighty, its evil manifestations and consequences were also mighty.

Such a malignant intellect, once allowed free play, without any social check, always turns out a potent source of menace to Society. For his own ends, he knew how and when to profess reverence for and applaud social virtues; but at heart he held them in utter contempt. His wicked propensities ever drove him on, and his clear, brilliant mind enabled him to conceal and enact his plans and policies for entrapping guileless persons. Hiding a most depraved and villainous nature, he passed off as a man of approved or reputed honesty, friendship, and loyalty. He has had no very great or grievous wrong to complain of. Hence he has now no explanation to offer in support of his deeds. When Othello requests Cassio to demand of him as to 'why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body,' he merely replies,—

Demand me nothing; what you know, you know:
From this time forth, I never will speak word.

By this, he means,—'you are now in possession of all the facts worth knowing and, from them, you will now know my real nature. I am what I am. That is explanation enough for my conduct. Therefore, demand me nothing, for, from this time forth, I never will speak word in explanation of my acts. In short, it is part of my wicked nature to keep my dark and secret plots and thoughts to myself, and not to let others know anything about them.'

Thus does Iago close his defence, and thus does he pride himself over his natural wickedness. In other words, he means to say, 'if I did evil, it was because I wanted to do it; it was my nature to do it, just as it is yours to act otherwise.' Struck with this shamefaced audacity of Iago, Gratiano, believing in the creed of the savage, exclaims,—

Torments will open you lips.

Lodovico next produces two letters found on the person of Roderigo, both of which incriminate Iago in certain criminal plans. 'One of them imports the death of Cassio, to be undertook by Roderigo. And the other is a paper full of discontent and complaints; and this, it seems, Roderigo meant to have sent this damned Villain; but that, belike, Iago in the interim came in and satisfied him.'

Thus, several facts and incidents, from various independent sources, now come to light and conclusively establish Iago's devilish rascality towards all he had to deal with. But one point is still mysterious to Othello; and he asks of Cassio,—

How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

And Cassio in reply explains,—

I found it in my chamber:
And he himself confess'd but even now
That there he dropp'd it for a special purpose
Which wrought to his desire.

Whereupon Othello exclaims in self-mortification,—
O fool! fool! fool!

PART XIX.

Othello's last words before he commits suicide.

Lodovico next addresses Othello and says—

You must forsake this room and go with us;
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus.

* * *

You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian State,

Othello, however, is averse to public trial and condemnation. So, he says,—

Soft you, a word or two before you go.

First, he thinks of recounting his services to the State, but saying 'they know it,' refrains from doing so. Besides, he is averse to blow his own trumpet as it is ungraceful and unbecoming of a truly noble nature. Then, as to the unlucky deeds and the motives which caused them, he begs Lodovico, Cassio and others to represent him as he is in reality,—

I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice; then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely but too well;

Of one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
 Perplex'd in the extreme ; of one whose hand,
 Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
 Richer than all his tribe ; of one whose subdued eyes,
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,
 Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
 Their medicinal gum.

He also begs them to 'set you down this ; and say besides,'—

.....that in Aleppo once,
 Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
 Beat a Venetian and traduced the State,
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog
 And smote him, thus,—

With this, he takes the last fatal step and stabs himself to death. He falls upon Desdemona's body, kisses her, and dies 'upon a kiss' Thus ends a grand and generous life,—coming to an untimely end, through the machinations of a clever scoundrel

PART XX.

Cassio, on Othello : Lodovico, to Iago.

CONCLUSION.

'O bloody period,' remarks Lodovico in horror. 'All that is spoke is marr'd', adds Gratiano. 'This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon,' says Cassio ; 'after all, it is proper he killed himself,' he continues, 'for, he was great of heart (and would not brook the disgrace of trial and punishment').

Lodovico then turns to Iago and, pointing to the bed, containing the dead bodies of Desdemona and Othello, denounces him in these loud and scathing terms,—

O Spartan dog,
 More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea !
 Look on the tragic loading of this bed ;
 This is thy work ; the object poisons sight ;
 Let it be hid.

Next, he turns to Gratiano who, being a brother of Brabantio, is the sole surviving uncle to Desdemona, and addresses him thus,—

.....Keep the house,
 And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor ;
 For, they succeed on you.

Finally, he speaks to Cassio thus,—

To you, lord governor,
 Remains the censure of this hellish villain,
 The time, the place, the torture : O, enforce it !

He then departs for Venice to relate 'this heavy act with a heavy heart' to the State.

Conclusion: We now slowly begin to emerge, with pity, despair and resignation, from the tension which made us hold our breath in awe and anxiety when we first saw Othello yielding to the passion of Jealousy. We feel as if we are coming out of the horrible inferno of bloody crimes, blunders and follies,—of the blind and reckless play of evil passions,—of the battle-field where the Innocents have been slaughtered to appease the hunger of a wild beast. A sweet and sinless soul,—a model of womanly purity on the one side; and a great heart, free from guile, dishonesty or base motives on the other side; have been ruthlessly victimised and finally devoured by the evil passion of Jealousy, which was, in this case, excited, without any valid grounds, by a monstrous villain to satisfy his own malignity.



ERRORS CORRECTED.

Special Introduction.

Page.	Line.	
3	Last but one	for 'childr', read 'children.'
7	13	for 'affairto', read 'affair to'.
„	Last	for '56', read '59',
9	22	for 'Iago's', read 'Iago's'.
19	32	for 'wc', read 'we'
21	8	for 'vindication', read 'vindication'.
22	2	for 'human', read 'human'.
„	6	for 'Othell's', read 'Othello's'.
24	Last Line	for 'swored', read 'sword'.
27	24	for 'shall', read 'shall'
„	3rd Line from last	for 'needl', read 'needs'
„	2nd do	for 'an', read 'all'.
„	Last Line	for 'asl', read 'an'.
29	17	for 'lads', read 'lads'.
33	17	for 'where', read 'were'.
34	Last Heading	for 'Husband's', read 'Husbands'.
37	First „	for 'dnunciation', read 'denunciation'.
„	„	for (2) and (3), read (1) and (2) respectively.
„	Third „	Insert (3)
„	Quotation No. 4	for 'Amil', read 'Emil' in 3 places
43	4	for 'newheraldry', read 'new heraldry'.
45	26	for 'parttle', read 'prattle'.
54	13	for 'themthen,' read 'them then'
55	2nd from last,	for 'as', read 'at'.
„	Last Line	for 'caue', read 'cause'
60	13	for 'isa n', read 'is an'.
61	21	for 'abovc', read 'above'.
„	Last Heading	for 'harded', read 'hardened'.

General Introduction.

IX	4	for 'tragediesnor', read 'tragedies nor'.
XXIV	7	for Shakespear', read 'Shakespeare'.
„	19	do do
„	34	do do
„	43	do do
„	47	do do
XXV	6	do do

Page.	Line.	
XXV	16	Substitute a full-stop for comma after 'it'.
XXXVIII	9	for 'it-usual', read 'its usual'.
XLIV	41	for 'conceering', read 'concerning'.
L	1	for '18', read '19'.
"	3	for 'nature', read 'nature'
"	17	for 'latter', read 'later.'
LI	7	Insert a comma after 'industry'
"	36	for 'returu', read 'return'
LII	36	Insert 'it' between 'centuries' and 'has'
LVI	9	Insert a full-stop after 'nature'
LIX	27	for 'syren', read 'siren'
LXI	31	for 'in', read 'is'.
LXIII	7	for 'appearnce', read 'appearance'
LXV	12	for 'ideanist', read 'idealist'
"	42	for 'burst', read 'bursts'
LXXIII	last but one	for 'disli, ked', read 'disliked'
LXXX	do	for 'he', read 'the'
XCVI	11	for 'the mare', read 'them are'.
XCIX	26	insert a full-stop after 'revenge'.
CII	5	for 'tog row', read 'to grow'.
CIII	35	for 'uot', read 'not'
CV	14	Insert a full-stop after 'least'
CX	31	for 'Villian', read 'Villain'

Othello with Text, Notes and Study.

11	4	of Text	At the end, insert 'Exit, from above.'
11	31	do	for 'Is', read 'are'
11	1	of Notes	for 'inflamable', read 'inflammable'.
15	10	do	for 'refering', read 'referring'.
"	11	do	for 'discernable', read 'discernible'.
24	6	do	for 'mumbled', read 'invested'.
25	3	do	for 'tae up', read 'take up'.
32	6	do	for 'tenour', read 'tenor'.
37	6	do	for 'in', read 'at'
38	22	do	for 'satisfied', read 'satiated'
39	2	do	after 'here', read a comma instead of 'full-stop'
43	15		for 'preferance', read 'preference'
	36		for 'Igao', read 'Iago'
45	19		omit one 'p' in 'supposed'.
"	35		for 'pulpil', read 'pupil'
48	30		for 'light', read 'lights'.

Page.	Line.		
52	2		for 'reverance', read 'reverence.
53	12		for 'delares', read 'declares'.
„	21		for 'sacreligion', read 'sacrilege'
66	27		for 'advice', read 'advise'.
71			for 'part X', read 'Part XI'.
73	42		for 'cleary', read 'clearly'
75	6		omit 'with' after 'tho'.
78	8		Enclose 'affects' within inverted commas
„	40		for 'Dukein' read 'Duke in'
79	3		for 'dispensibie', read 'dispensable'.
80	19		for 'breedidg' read 'breeding'.
91	28		for 'manouvering', read 'manœuvring'.
98	9	of Notes	for 'fit', read 'fits'.
103	5	do	insert 'to', after 'listen'.
105	26	do	for 'practicing', read 'practising'.
109	5	do	for 'sometime' read 'some time'
110	21	of Text.	Insert number '15' after 'drink'.
„	24	do	Substitute colon for comma after 'potting'.
110	8	of Notes	for 'fuster'd', read 'fluster'd'
„	11	do	for 'onese lf', read 'oneself'.
111	12	do	for 'horologue', read 'horologe'.
113	7	of Text	insert a full-stop after 'evil'.
„	3	of Notes	insert '4' before 'A Knave'.
115	10	of Text	for 'devesting', read 'divesting'.
120	last line.	do	for 'Csa', read 'Cas'.
130	7		for 'birdling', read 'birdlime'.
141	24		for 'ow', read 'now'
143	15		for 'kin dled', read 'kindled'.
146			for Part VII, read 'Part VIIa'
155	34		for 'tempt er', read 'tempter'.
156	20		for 'he', read 'Iago'.
157			For 'part XIV', read 'part XIII'
164			For 'XV', read 'Part XIV'
„			For 'Part XVI', read 'Part XV'
170			For 'Part XVII', read 'Part XVI'
172			For 'Part XVIII', read 'Part XVII'
173	47		for 'harvcst', read 'harvest'.
174	5		for 'lutimate', read 'ultimate'.
„			for 'Part XIX', read 'Part XVIII'
175	24		for 'till', read 'till'.

Page.	Line.		
179	Head Line.		for ['Act III. Sc. 3'] read ['Act III.].
„	27	of Outline	for 'remindhim' read 'remind him'
„	28	do	for 'wating', read 'waiting'.
181	3	of Text	for 'Naple', read 'Naples'.
187	33	do	for 'perdition', read 'perdition'
189	13	of Notes	for informations', read 'information.
192	16	do	for 'extolls', read 'extols'.
201	10		for 'pourting', read 'pointing'.
205	20	of Text	for 'pioners', read 'pioneers'.
211	23	do	for 'ts gone', read 'Tis gone.'
„	24	do	for 'Arise', read 'Arise'.
213	21	of Notes	for 'your', read 'you'.
214		Motto under picture	for 'aud', read 'and'.
217	4	of Notes	for 'lie', read 'life'.
„	5	do	for 'nof', read 'not'
219	15	do	omit 'As : or'
„	16, 17, 18	do	substitute the following for the existing meaning up to '22'—'I shall not be able even to recognise him if he should look changed in his appearance or face also, as he does already in his temper.
220	16	of Text	for 'stat e-matters', read 'State-matters'.
221	6	do	Insert a full-stop after 'cause'.
„	7	of Notes	straighten the inverted 'a' in 'additional'
272	17	do	for 'Othello s', read 'Othello's'
290	23	of Study	for 'sIt', read 'Is't.'
299	16	of Foot-note	substitute a full-stop for comma after 'incarcerated'.
312	25	of Study	for 'Husbands', read 'Husbands',
334	9	of Notes	for 'Whenit', read 'when it'.
339	6	do	for 'destroyi ng', read 'destroying'
355	35		for 'devi', read 'devil'.
363	20		for 'Warburton', read 'Johnson'
368	Last Line		for 'Moorhas', read 'Mo.

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